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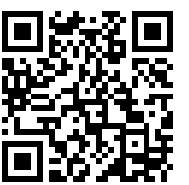

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GEORGE FERRIS WHIDBORNE
AUGUST 1912

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GEORGE FERRIS WHIDBORNE, M.C.

(COLDSTREAM GUARDS)

His Life and Surroundings

OCTOBER 1ST, 1890—OCTOBER 24TH, 1915

[Mrs. Margaret Whidborne.]

GLASGOW

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PREFACE

THE following record of my son's life has been undertaken at the request of many friends and relations, who felt that they would like to have a permanent memorial of George Whidborne's joyous and happy personality, which impressed all who came in contact with him.

His life has been written more fully than would otherwise have been the case, in order that the next generation may have some idea of the home-life in the days preceding the Great War.

M. W.

April 1916.

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CHAPTER I

PARENTAGE AND CHILDHOOD

ST. GEORGE'S—THE PRIORY

MEMOIRS are usually written for one of two reasons. It may be either that the man or woman whose story is told has achieved fame during the course of a long life, in which case the book will be perused for an account of noted deeds and utterances; or perchance a remarkable boy or girl has died prematurely —as the world considers—and it is desired that some record of his or her beautiful life should be preserved as an example and a help to others of a similar age. But during the war there has arisen still another class, whose lives are as worthy of record as any.

Amongst the many results of the great war, perhaps none are more noteworthy than its unexpected revelations of character and qualities which, like the rare beauties of ocean depths, have ever been existent but have only now been brought to the surface by the dredging net of strife and circumstance. From every class alike has come this testimony of sterling worth and grit. Literature, music, art and poetry have all given their hostages to Death, and although those of us who believe in another world think that their talents are developing in a different sphere, yet the sad loss to this world seems irreparable.

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This memoir is not written because it is considered that the subject of it is more remarkable than many others who have fallen in the war, but because a truthful account of how an upright English boy developed into a hero, may help other parents to go forward with the training of their children, knowing that in due time they "will reap" if they "faint not."

George Ferris Whidborne was the first-born child of the Rev. George Ferris Whidborne, who belonged to a well-known Devonshire family, being descended from Sir Richard Whidborne, one of those stalwart "seamen-yeomen" who provided ships and also fought himself against the Spanish Armada.

This same Sir Richard wrote a curious *Discourse and Discovery of New-found-land*, and was a pioneer of that colony. He was given a collection in all the churches in England, "by command of the King," in order that there should be "an encouragement of adventures" and to help in the printing of his "booke" and to repay him for his "losses received at sea by Pyrates and otherwise of which His Majesty had been creditably certified."

All that remained of the once extensive lands round Dawlish which had belonged to George's ancestors, and which came to him at his father's death, was a little property known as Lydwell, on which are ruins of a small chapel, with a legend attached to it about a wicked monk who decoyed unwary travellers from Haldon Hill near by and murdered them for their money.[1]

[1] At Ludwell, an estate of Mr. Richard Whidborne near Haldon, in a field called Chapel Park, is the ruin of St. Mary, of which the proprietor can give no other account than that he had heard his father say, "it is prayed for in holy Catholic countries by the name of the Holy Chapel at Ludwell." He added that his father, when he gave him the estate, exacted a promise from him that he would

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Both George Whidborne and his father were very proud of being men of Devon. In one of the boy's speeches at a political debate at Cambridge, on the need of a strong navy, he said: "England, as a small island shoved away in a corner of Europe, had no influence in the world, but she had *men* in her country in the early days—men who were no 'Little Englanders'—who gave their money and gave themselves and some of the chief and the most generous were the men of Devon."

George's father, Ferris Whidborne, was a remarkable character, one of those selfless, clever men whose real worth is not appreciated until they are gone.

He was educated at Cheltenham and Clifton Colleges and at Corpus Christi, Cambridge, of which he was a scholar, and from which he graduated in 1868 as a Senior Optime in mathematics and with a third class in the Classical Tripos. This success at Cambridge was the first honour gained at that University by the newly-founded Clifton College.

He was the only son living, his brother Seymour having died at the age of four, and was idolised by his family circle, especially by his uncle, whose heir he was. His relations were therefore rather upset when, at the age of sixteen, he wrote the following letter to his father, a clever, cultivated divine of the old school [1]:

---

never remove any of the stones or any part of the building. There are no monuments remaining of any persons buried there. This chapel is called in the *Liber regis*, Lithewyll.

Polwhele, page 150.

An old chapel in the Bishop's house was demolished by Thomas Widburn of Ashhill, who used the materials in his own building.

History of Devonshire, by Rev. Polwhele. Part i. p. 153. (Folio edition, 1797.)

[1] George Ferris Whidborne, educated at Queen's College, Oxford. Incumbent, first of Charles Chapel (now St. Luke's), and afterwards

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"My dear Papa,

You have for a long time intended me to be a clergyman, but I wish not merely to be one, but to be also a missionary. This is no new idea—for years and years I have entertained it, though I have told no one. I think now the time is come for action. The world is hastening to its end. Perhaps if I wait until I am ordained, I may not see Africa in this present life. Therefore, God willing, and you and Mama permitting, when I am of age, if not before, I hope to be crossing the wide sea which separates me from the place where I would be.

This idea my love of nature has developed, and though I hope God's cause will ever be my chief object, yet I shall have this as a second one. I long to see Nature as free as possible from the injuries of man. I hate fashionable society, with all its frauds and freezings! I propose therefore that I go to college in the wilds, and by learning the language and customs of the natives, prepare myself for my life's task. If after two or three years' separation I find anyone missing, I hope to see him again above. . . ."

After a wise reply from his father, in which he says that he fears it is chiefly the boy's passion for Natural History that is leading him, his son replies:

"If I wait till I am ordained, the world may be ended, therefore after next Christmas I am ready to go. . . . I do not think I was born to gabble over a lot of grammar or to waste my time discussing

---

of Christ Church, Plymouth, and *locum-tenens* at Combeinteignhead, where the bells were re-hung in his memory in 1896 by his daughters. He was also incumbent of St. John's, Hanley, in Staffordshire, where a window was put into the church in memory of his work there by the congregation on his departure from the parish.

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whether there are prepositions in Homer. I believe I was made for higher things than these!"

The boy's quaintly-worded desire was destined never to be realized. In after years he visited America for the meetings of the British Association, but whenever he began to make plans to go to Africa, they were thwarted.

Disregard for his own comfort, coupled with extreme determination of character, was very marked in him. In one of his letters to his mother from school he writes: "I strongly object to travelling first class," because she had told him to come home comfortably, as he had a cold. It must be remembered that in those days trains were very different from what they are now, the third class carriages being little better than our present cattle trucks.

Being unable to become a missionary owing to his many home claims, he was ordained in 1881, his first curacy being at St. Pancras under Canon Spence, now Dean of Gloucester.

In 1883 he took a chaplaincy at Chamonix, and whilst on his way there had an exciting experience. When in the train near Paris, he was attacked by a Frenchman who mistook him for a bank official, and was afterwards very much disturbed to find that he had nearly murdered a "priest"! Early in the afternoon the man had offered him a drink, which he had, of course, refused. The moment that he thought that Mr. Whidborne was asleep, he attacked him with a chisel, and afterwards produced a revolver. The two men wrestled from side to side of the carriage, until at last Mr. Whidborne was able to fling off his assailant, and seize his revolver, which he threw under the seat lest he might be tempted to use it. With great courage

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he then got out of the carriage, the door of which had been opened during the struggle, and walked along the footboard, until at last some friends, who were in another part of the train, pulled him through their window. It was characteristic of him that he had not entered the next carriage, because there was a lady alone in it, and he did not wish to alarm her, as he certainly would have done, covered with blood as he was.

The man, who in the meantime had shot himself, though not fatally, was captured, tried and sentenced. His victim, who recovered quickly, although he had no less than five wounds on his head, afterwards pleaded for mercy for him, and helped to support the man's wife and family while he was in prison. The affair caused a great sensation at the time, and helped to bring before the public the need for corridor carriages in railway trains.

From 1886 to 1888 Ferris Whidborne was the loyal and beloved colleague of Prebendary Webb-Peploe at St. Paul's, Onslow Square, to whom he gave a son-like affection.

Being a man of exceptional judgment and with extraordinary foresight, he was of great value on committees, and was a member of several Church Trusts.

Besides his clerical work, he looked after his large London property with the greatest care, thinking not only of the bodily condition of the poor on his estates, but of their souls also, helping many of the parishes financially, and himself going to preach in the churches.

His early love of Nature continued through his life.

In a letter written to the late Dean Barlow in 1904 about a book he had recently published on the subject of Evil in Nature,[1] he says: "I see in Nature all and

[1] *The Existence of Evil in the History of Nature* (Thynne & Sons).

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everywhere the hand of a good Creator, conquering the Evil and forming the Good. From the white mountain to the diatom, the things of earth bear the impress of beauty and wisdom, which cannot be accounted for by any of the forces of the earth. . . . All through Nature I see not only the signs of a good Creator, but the signs of the continual Conqueror of Evil."

Although as a boy he had an exceptional knowledge of Natural History, yet he had been led to take up palæontology as his special scientific work by his friend, Professor T. M'Kenny Hughes of Cambridge. Ferris Whidborne was the great authority of his day on Devonian geology, and corresponded constantly with geologists of other countries. In a letter of sympathy to Mrs. Whidborne after her husband's death, Professor Barrois of Lille, an eminent French scientist, wrote:

"I wish someone of his children may be a geologist, as geology and science would enjoy in finding again in the geological literature one of this good name, and your young geologist would be proud to see what esteem for the name of his father has been that held by the scientific world in his day. Still better than his scientific fame has been, however, for his friends the loyalism of his character and the delicacy of his soul; those who knew him considered him one of the best they knew, and no children could have better blood or better examples than yours."

This testimony to his scientific work is borne out in the following speech of the President of the Geological Society, in commenting on the loss of Fellows in 1910:

"My first duty as incoming President of the Society was to attend his funeral at his beautiful house at

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Hammerwood, in the heart of the Weald. He joined the Society in 1876, and several times served on its Council and on the Council of the Palæontographical Society. He contributed papers on Inferior Oolite Fossils and on the geographical distribution of the Plesiosaurs to the *Quarterly Journal*; printed lists of Devonian fossils, largely from his own collection, in the *Proceedings of the Geologists' Association*; described fossils of Lower Devonian if not Silurian affinities from the Morte Slates for Dr. H. Hicks; and published papers dealing mainly with Devonian fossils in the *Geological Magazine*. But his great geological work was contributed to the Palæontographical Society. At first he contented himself with sending numerous brachiopods from his collection to Thomas Davidson to deal with in his great Monograph. But, later, he was prevailed upon to undertake the description of the entire fauna of the Devonian Limestones and of the Marwood and Pilton Beds in a single monograph. This was published, and forms a complete work in three bulky volumes, the excellent illustrations of which were, many of them, contributed at his own expense." [1]

"His valuable collection of geological specimens and his library have been presented by Mrs. Whidborne to the Sedgwick Museum at Cambridge. His death removes one whose companionship was most genial, who acted as a generous benefactor to several geological causes, a palæontologist of mark, and a man beloved by many friends."

He was also a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, to whose *Proceedings* he contributed. At his death many of the obituary notices commented on his

[1] He also published several books dealing with religious subjects as viewed from a scientific standpoint.

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strong faith, combined with his great interest in Physical Science. It was not known until after he was gone what a number of men had been gained for the ministry both by his wise counsel and by his financial help in their college careers; his unfailing tact and knowledge of modern scientific difficulties giving him great influence with those who came to him for advice.

Many of the religious movements at the end of the nineteenth century were liberally supported in their infancy by him, and as he had never been able to go abroad as a missionary, he dedicated a large sum annually to the Church Missionary Society "in lieu of service."

It was no doubt from his father that George Whidborne inherited his poetical disposition, which showed itself in a great facility for verse-making, some of his poems and hymns being very beautiful. Ferris Whidborne did not wish his son to take after him in this respect, as he considered that poetry had consumed too much time in his college days and had encouraged his naturally rather dreamy and melancholy temperament.

It was not a surprise to those who knew the element of self-sacrifice in Ferris Whidborne's character, when he accepted the poor London living of St. George's, Battersea.

In 1889, shortly after his induction, he was married at St. Mary Abbot's, Kensington, to Margaret, elder daughter of the late Charles Harcourt Chambers, barrister-at-law, the only son of Sir Charles Chambers,[1] Chief Justice of Bombay, who had married Isabella Wilson of Polmaily, Glen Urquhart.

Mrs. Whidborne's mother, Lucebella Hare, was the only daughter of Captain Marcus Hare of Rock End,

[1] See *Memoirs of a Highland Lady*, edited by Lady Strachey.

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Torquay, and of the L. A. H. of *The Memorials of a Quiet Life*, the well-known record of the Hares of Hurstmonceaux Castle, Sussex.[1] L. A. H. or Lucy Anne Hare was the third daughter of the first Lord Stanley of Alderley, who had married Maria Josepha Holroyd, elder daughter of Lord Sheffield of Sheffield Place, Sussex.

Through his mother, George Whidborne could claim three descents from Edward III., and according to the Marquis of Ruvigny, that marvellous genealogist, all those that are descended from that king can also claim descent from Charlemagne, Alfred the Great, William the Conqueror, St. Louis, Frederick Barbarossa and many other makers of history—at anyrate in later years amongst George's fighting ancestors can be found Lord Howard of Effingham and Charles Mordaunt, the celebrated Earl of Peterborough.

ST. GEORGE'S, BATTERSEA

The marriage was an ideal one, and the little Vicarage at Battersea became a very bright spot to the newly-married couple and their friends, in spite of its somewhat squalid surroundings.

Through his mother, Rosa Lucas, who came of a well-known Quaker family, Ferris Whidborne had inherited large estates.

In the dining-room at Hammerwood House there may be seen an old portrait of a man dressed in a brown coat, with a wig. This is the picture of one Joseph Lucas, born in 1739, who belonged to one of those families of Friends who made their fortunes from

[1] See *Memoirs of Maria Josepha Holroyd*, in two volumes, edited by J. H. Adeane; and *Life and Letters of Dean Stanley*.

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trading with foreign countries. Owing to their religious principles, the careers of the Church, Army, Navy and Law were closed to them, but they prospered exceedingly.

Joseph Lucas was a partner in the large shipping firm of Lucas and Spencer, and had a share in the Northern Whale Fishery, which probably accounts for the fine narwhal tusks and other over-the-sea products which the family have inherited, with old furniture and pictures, from his house in Surrey, long pulled down, which also contained wood from some of the ships in the Spanish Armada. In his youth he had migrated from Hitchin to London, and as he never married, the estates went to his nephew Joseph, who, however, died from eating mushrooms when a young man at Irthlingborough, where he had another estate. His younger brother John then came into possession, and effected great improvements in the property, adding land to it at Clapham and Battersea, both of which were then more or less waste ground, but are now covered with houses and manufactories and railways. The property finally descended by entail, through his nephew James Lucas to Ferris Whidborne, the only son of his sister Rosa.

As Ferris Whidborne was the sole male representative of his family, and had married rather late in life, little George's advent a year and a half after his parents had settled in Battersea was hailed with joy, and interested even comparative strangers.

At the time of George's birth the sisters of Rosa Whidborne, Miss Maria and Miss Sarah Lucas, still lived near Clifton, at the Priory, Westbury-on-Trym. They had taken the greatest interest in their nephew's marriage, and welcomed the arrival of the little son. Ferris' five sisters also were delighted that their much-

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loved brother was a father at last. On his mother's side, George was the first grandchild, and to his six young uncles and aunt the baby was a never-ceasing source of wonder and interest. With his early precocity and bright engaging manner he won a place in their affections which other nephews and nieces and even their own children never usurped.

There was also great excitement in the parish, where the happy married life of the Vicar and "Vicaress" was looked on with much sympathetic interest, especially by some of the older people, who thoroughly appreciated the fact that one of the local landowners was ministering to their spiritual needs. Their affection expressed itself in the presentation of a handsome silver knife, fork and spoon to the little son, who, in his beautiful clothes and with his smart nurse, was an unusual sight in the Battersea Park Road.

His christening cake from Buszard's was large enough for all the Mothers' Meeting to have a share, and he gave away some of it with his own hand!

No one who was present at his baptism could ever forget his father's expression as he baptised his first-born child.

Over a hundred letters of congratulation were received, one of the most interesting being from old Mr. Joseph Lucas, his father's distant cousin and family lawyer, who was delighted because George was born on his fifty-fifth wedding day. He and his wife both lived until 1903, when they died aged respectively 92 and 88, having been married for sixty-seven years, and having had seventeen children.

From the time he was a baby it was remarked that George seemed to prefer the company of grown-up people. For other children he did not care at all, but

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was especially fond of quite old people. He once apologised for this trait, stating that the reason was because his parents were grown up! A subtle and Georgian compliment.

The following letter will show how this characteristic was appreciated. It was written to his great-aunt in Scotland by an old Scotch lady, Mrs. Frazer, who had asked to see the great-grandson of her old friend Lady Chambers.

"April 2nd, 1891.

"I have not patience to wait a moment since seeing dear Auntie Bell's great-grandchild, without telling you that he is quite worthy of being her descendant. I never saw a more charming child—extremely pretty and truly 'a wee bit moosa'c sweet and bonny'—such a blithe, merry little chap. To my great delight he made merriest friendship with me from the moment he came into the morning-room. His head is really beautiful, and I am sure will prove a very clever one. He kept looking at me as if wondering who I could be, and always finished with such a sweet smile. . . . I never was so delighted with any baby but my own, and I am sure he will soon show that he is very clever, he seemed so intelligent and mirthful."

He was soon introduced to his relations, and, amongst other visits, he went to Purbrook House, near Cosham, where there was a large gathering of his mother's family to meet the eldest brother and his bride. George was the only baby of the party, and never was a child more adored, and never did a child comport himself in a more lordly way! In his eyes the whole world seemed to be run for his benefit, and no doubt he would have been completely spoiled had not a brother, Charles Stanley Lucas, come to share his nursery on September 25th,

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1891. The boys were constantly taken for twins when they grew older, and their relationship to each other was of a "twin-like" description.

Even though occasionally quarrelsome, they were never happy for long apart, and they admired each other immensely.

The only occasions on which they were separated for more than a few weeks was when George was in Africa and later when Charlie was in India. They left for the Front within two days of each other, and in the date and place of their wounds their destinies were almost the same.

During the summer of 1892 the babies were taken on a visit to Portland by their mother. Their grandmother and their aunt, Ida Chambers, were also of the party. The latter was at this time engaged to the Commander of the finest and latest battleship, the "Royal Sovereign," now, alas! consigned to the scrap-heap. Commander C. Winnington Ingram (now Rear-Admiral) was then in port, as was also a brother, Bertram Chambers, a lieutenant in the training-ship "Boscawen," and a cousin, Admiral Sir Edward Adeane, who was second in command of the Channel Squadron, of which the "Royal Sovereign" formed part. With so many naval relations, life proved very gay, but George, with his newly-acquired ability for making remarks, was not the least attractive gentleman of the party.

His acquaintance with the Highlands dates also from the August of this year, when the children visited their mother's aunts, Miss Charity and Miss Annie Chambers. This was the first of a succession of happy visits which George made to Scotland. The old ladies[1] were

[1] One of them known as the Authoress of the Glen, see *Urquhart and Glenmoriston* (Mackay).

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steeped in Scotch lore and the traditions of the past, as also were their faithful servants, and George was brought up in families where long service was valued. There was "Khena,"[1] his grandmother's maid, who died in the arms of her mistress after fifty-six years' devotion to her family. There was G. G. or "Jar" (Mrs. Elliott), the maid of his great-grandmother, Mrs. Hare, who had seen five generations. Whilst at the Priory the combined years of service of the household amounted to several hundreds!

At Polmaily, Glen Urquhart, the "ancient retainers" had wonderful stories to tell of their ancestors who, in the Scottish way, had been in the service of the children's ancestors and how one had saved the baby heir from a burning castle and carried him on her back to her own people's little croft. George's nurse (S. E. Manners), who has now been in the family for nearly twenty-six years, was intensely pleased with this tale, and amused her master by wishing that something of the sort might happen again so that she might show her devotion to her charges!

A favourite story of "the Aunts" was of the way in which the name Charles came into the family. The version which the old ladies used to give was somewhat as follows:

"In one of the houses in the Glen, all of which at that time belonged to the Grant family, there was lying in an old-fashioned cradle a little baby—the son of the house. A party of the neighbouring gentry were gathered there, for it was the occasion of the christening of the heir. Suddenly a servant entered, announcing that he heard firing. Up sprang the kilted Scots, but before leaving to fight for Prince Charlie at Culloden

[1] *True Stories of Faithful Friends*, by Maude Stanley.

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Moor, on which field some of the party were to lay down their lives, they placed the baby's tiny hands on their swords, vowing in his name that he should be a loyal subject to the Prince and declaring that his name should be Charles. After the battle, when the father of the baby was hiding in the mountains, a party of English soldiers rode up to the house, disturbing the silence of the fair Glen, where the mother was anxiously awaiting news of her husband. The baby lay in the cradle at her feet and on the table was an open Bible, for the lady was very pious, so much so that she was known as 'Kitty Colossians'! [1]

"The leader's glance fell on the book, and starting back, he exclaimed, 'Madam, we will not trouble you to search further, that Bible shows that no rebel is hidden here.'"

It seems that so closely was the cause of the Stuarts identified with that of Roman Catholicism, that the existence of the open Bible was thought sufficient guarantee for the loyalty of the family, who were, however, staunch Protestants, though Jacobites.

The cave, high up in the hills, where their ancestor hid for weeks and where his faithful people brought him food and necessaries, was pointed out to the boys by their great-aunts' old servants.

But to return to George's babyhood.

From Scotland he went to visit the other old aunts at the Priory. No babies had ever lived there, and Theodora Whidborne was the first child to be born in the house, but great preparations were always made for the little great-nephews and nieces, both Whidbornes

[1] She had been Kitty Baillie of Fort-Augustus, and the letter of proposal which she received from her husband, Patrick Grant, was carefully preserved by her, wrapped up in an old silk stocking.

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and Elversons, who visited there. An old-fashioned cradle, hung with white dimity, was brought out, and silver dishes and beautiful china and glass got ready for their parents' delectation.

The customs at the Priory were very early-Victorian. The old ladies still had dinner at six o'clock, and at 8.30 a big urn was brought into the dining-room and everyone went in there to partake of tea—no afternoon tea being allowed. The tea was unusually good, as they *would* pay the same price for it as they had paid in their early days, when it was a great luxury, and there was always nice hot buttered toast. It was brought in by the old butler, Harris, who was kept in order like a boy by his still older mistresses. After having been thirty-three years in the service of the family, this old retainer had to retire in 1903 on account of his age.

These aunts, who were rather like the old ladies in Mrs. Sherwood's stories, were very conservative in their attire, wearing Quaker-like black dresses, with white kerchiefs, and, when they went out, drawn satin or silk bonnets, something like modern motoring headgear. They were very generous, their christening present to George being the most beautiful silver sugar-basin procurable, and they showered benefits on his parents. They did not leave home for many years before they died, and would never send flowers to Battersea, because they remembered it in their youth as being in the country.

As a child George was constantly taken to the Zoological Gardens at Clifton by his father, who wished to imbue him with his own love of natural history. They were always happy when visiting any sort of "animal place" together. George was very tender-hearted as a child, refusing to be comforted at the loss of a pet and showing emotion on hearing any sad story.

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The children were thorough Londoners, and the movement of the streets appealed to them. They were perfectly happy at Battersea, where their nursery window had a really splendid view over the smaller houses behind as far as Norwood, and where there were endless trains passing—always a joy to small boys.

Battersea Park, near by, to which they went daily, was once a swamp, and at that time it was in the rather dull stage of most London parks twenty-five years ago, before the County Council took them in hand and filled them with beautiful flowers and curious water-fowl. Still there *was* green grass, on which the little ragged children of the neighbourhood played cricket. There were few better class people to be seen in those days in Battersea, and the little Whidbornes were very noticeable, with their nurses, dressed in white, which caused small children to call after them that they were "dressed in sheets."

The old Albert Palace was still there, with its broken glass and neglected garden, and the large piece of waste ground owned by the Water-works Company had not then been built over. About 1894 the craze for bicycling made the Park fashionable, but before that very few people outside Battersea seemed to be aware of its existence. The Archbishop of Canterbury had, however, found it out, and rode there constantly in the little "Row," whilst later on the present Prince of Wales was frequently to be seen driving with his nurses, who made him respond to the loyal salutes of little George Whidborne.

In 1893 the family went to Woolacombe, in North Devon, in order that Mr. Whidborne might meet his friend Dr. Hicks, President of the Geological Society, with whom he spent many happy holidays in the pursuit

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of their mutual hobby. Although under three years of age, George's bright eyes were quite useful for finding the fossils, and until his death a few years later, Dr. Hicks was one of those most interested in the boy's development.

In the October of the same year another baby, "Bertram Seymour," made his appearance in the nursery. He was a peaceful child, and the three little brothers were very happy together.

Their mother kept a record of her children's sayings and doings, and the book became a family history which was much appreciated by all in later years. Many amusing remarks made about this time by George are recorded. It describes his pleasure, when lunching with some friends, at the thought that he was eating "owl," and his disappointment afterwards when he found out that it was only a "barn-door" fowl!—his excitement at seeing one of the first electric trams, which "went all by itself without horses,"—his pity for poor little Samuel in the picture, who had "no Muvie to say his prayers to,"—his insistence that the fish thrown to the seals at the Zoo were only "dinner fish," and therefore "feelingless,"—his desire, when hearing the Bible read, to know if "the young child took his presents with him to Egypt," and why he did not go "by train,"—his acting stories, and his many coined words, such as "sea gee-gees" for boats. "Tell me about the lady who became a pillar-box" was his quaint description of Lot's wife.

He always wanted to know "the reason why" for everything, and as a consequence found it especially difficult to be implicitly obedient, but he certainly *tried* to be good more than many children. He seemed to have found out the secret of perpetual motion, and the

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book tells of his restlessness when he and Charlie were being painted by the clever and kind Mr. Hanson Walker, whose portrait of their mother had been in the Academy the year before.

George's facility for making friends with older people was so marked that no record of his life would be complete without mentioning some of them, and amongst others at this time was Dr. Thorold, Bishop of Winchester. He had retired through ill-health, and was staying at Torquay whilst the Whidbornes were there. He took the trouble to come up to Charanté in order to see the little boy of whose birth he had been so pleased to hear. It was a pretty sight to see the stately bishop and the small child bowing courteously to each other. Most people were afraid of him, as he was rather an austere man, but not George!

Before he was six years old George took part in many functions, one of the most interesting of these being the opening of the new Mission Hall which his father had given to the parish. His presence of mind and self-possession were far in advance of his years, and enabled those in charge of him to be wholly at ease about his deportment at critical moments.

The following extract from a newspaper account describes his part in the ceremony:

"At the request of the Bishop, the Marchioness of Londonderry then rose, and said, in simplest but most winning manner: 'I have great pleasure in declaring the St. George's Parochial Hall open.' There was a burst of applause, which was redoubled when a little toddler in white—it was Mr. Whidborne's elder son—performed in a most creditable fashion the trying function of presenting a huge bouquet to Lady Londonderry. He was less shy under such an ordeal than

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when the Bishop stepped forward and lifted him up to the admiring gaze of the audience."

Other interesting occasions in which George played a prominent part were the family weddings, which just then were very frequent. He and Charlie, dressed in men-of-war suits, were pages to their aunt Mrs. C. Winnington-Ingram; and again later, in white satin cavalier suits, at the weddings of the two Misses Sandeman to their uncles, Marcus and Theodore Chambers.

The boys' parents took much interest in the Missions to Seamen Institute at Poplar, which was then being built, and at its opening the young people presented purses to the Princess of Wales. Little Charlie was so small that the present King helped him up on to the step, a kindly act which was noticed in the newspaper reports. As the boys in white sailor suits drove away from the building through the lines of sightseers they were evidently taken for small "Royalties," and were loudly cheered. George quite unconcernedly leaned forward and bowed to the right and left in a most appreciative way!

At the age of five George had the great joy of possessing a little sister, "Margarita Lucy," who was christened by the Bishop of Southwark,[1] with nineteen other children, in St. George's Church. Soon afterwards she and her eldest brother went down to Bournemouth with their mother, and when there George wrote his first letter (by dictation) to Charlie and Seymour; it is very descriptive:

"There were birds all chattering about when it was getting morning, there are many birds in this country." He describes the hotel and what he has for meals in

[1] The Right Rev[d]. Huyshe Yeatman, afterwards Bishop of Worcester.

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detail, and mentions "a donkey called 'Nellie.'" The letter continues: "A bow-wow standed up and had bits of bread for its dinner." A novel way of describing French blinds comes next: "There isn't blinds like Charlie's blinds, only with boards across and the sun comes through in the morning." He ends up with "George will love Seymour and Charlie too!" and it is signed by himself quite respectably.

The children loved bathing in the sea so much that George said he would like to stay in it till he went to Heaven. "So should I," said Charlie, "but," he added, characteristically, "I should like a pillow!" There was always a great debate between them as to whether there were beds in Heaven, which was a very real place to the little boys. Once, when a treat was over, George remarked that "he had now only Christmas and Heaven to look forward to."

The chief amusements in the nursery at this time were playing at soldiers and the game of chess, at which they showed much skill.

During his incumbency their father restored the church, and in connection with this the following letter from the dear old churchwarden, Mr. Lathey, is of interest:

"MADAM,

May I ask your acceptance of the mallets sent herewith, one for each of your two noble boys, in remembrance of the laying the Memorial Stones on St. Thomas' Day.

"They are made from part of an ash tree that grew at the rear of the old Mission Room in the New Road, and the carver who cut the inscription was a St. George's School boy, and lived with his parents in St. George's, now Wadhurst Road."

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It is interesting to note than when their mother took the handsome carved mallets to the Army and Navy Stores in order to have stands made for them, the man who took the order had also been a St. George's boy.

Mr. Whidborne had now been nearly seven years in Battersea. His little daughter was very delicate, and the daily sights and surroundings of the place were not those with which he wished his children to become familiar as they grew older, and both he and his wife felt that they themselves needed a long rest. He therefore decided to go, at anyrate for a time, to his home in Gloucestershire. In 1893 the Priory had come into his possession, and until he went to live there three years later, it had been sometimes lent to friends, and sometimes used as a country home for the little Whidbornes when the heat of Battersea became unbearable, or when a change was needed after some infantile illness.

George and Charles were now to leave the nursery entirely and to enter on a schoolroom life.

THE PRIORY, WESTBURY-ON-TRYM, 1896-1903

At the Priory,[1] which was supposed to have been built on the site of an old chapel, George spent seven happy years. It was a pretty grey house of Gothic architecture, surrounded by about fourteen acres of field and garden. One of its chief features was a conservatory twenty feet high and over one hundred feet long, opening out of the dining-room. It had been erected against a long wall, which was covered with climbing geraniums, of which about forty different kinds had been planted, and through the greater part of the year

[1] See *Muriel Bertram*, by Agnes Giberne, for description of the Priory.

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the brilliant vista of reds and pinks was most striking and unusual.

The house was five miles from the Bristol Railway Station, to which the children used to drive in a roomy, old-fashioned omnibus when they went away to different seaside places in the west of England. There were seats on the top, making it almost like a coach, and it took many a happy party of young people into the beautiful lanes of Somersetshire and Gloucestershire, where they explored remote villages and had merry picnics in fields of cowslips and sweet-scented blue-bell woods.

During these years George lived the ordinary healthy life of an English child, with his garden, books and pets, chief of the latter being "Tommy," the pony, and "Violet," the donkey, who is still alive, though aged twenty-four years.

Being situated so near a big city, the Priory was much in request for garden meetings and festivities. It was calculated that as many as 1200 guests were entertained during one summer in its pretty grounds. Missionaries from all parts of the world met on those green lawns, and once there came a tall dark Sikh in his native headgear, who was studying medicine in Europe. It is no wonder then that little George was so much influenced by all he heard and saw, that he, like his father before him, made up his mind that some day he would go out to heathen lands as a clergyman, though, as he sagely remarked, "I would not marry, as I do not think it would be a happy life for my wife and children if I had to leave them behind!"

The children often accompanied their mother when she opened bazaars in the large poor parishes of Bristol, and through this constant intercourse with young and

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old, the boys acquired an ease of manner which was invaluable to them in after life, especially to George, whose natural charm was thus drawn out. They were never shy or timid ; in fact, they were almost too daring. Their escapades were many, and one occasion is well remembered when their parents, to their horror, looked up from the garden at the Priory and saw George and Charlie walking along a most dangerous parapet on the roof!

Christmas-time was always well kept in the family, and the large children's parties in the big hall, which was such a feature of the Priory, at one of which the newly-invented cinematograph was shown, were long remembered by the children of the neighbourhood. Amongst these were the children of Mr. Nevile Sherbrooke, Ruth Livingstone-Learmonth, and the three little daughters of Mrs. Charles Savile, who daily promenaded the Downs with George's younger sisters. Their uncle, Keith Savile, another playmate, laid down his life in the same Great Struggle as George, his mother writing of him to Mrs. Whidborne: "We have the most wonderful testimonies to his courage, his brightness, his unselfish thought for others and the influence of his life in the trenches."

Another boy friend, though older than George, was Douglas Pass,[1] cousin of the Whidbornes' friend, Miss Howard. There were also the grand-children of dear Mrs. Harford of Blaise Castle, whose friendship with the Hares of Hurstmonceaux, as a "De Bunsen," gave her a warm affection for the little Whidbornes ; others too were the grand-children of the much-loved Mrs.

[1] After fighting in Gallipoli during the Great War for some months, he was taken prisoner by the Turks, having previously been reported as missing.

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Pease, a near neighbour, who wrote of this time: "I remember so well your bright and promising boy . . . and the joy and pride he was of his mother's heart."

The Ways of Henbury were naturally the most intimate friends of the Whidbornes, both Canon and Mrs. Way being cousins of George's mother, and their grand-children, Ways and Bakers, were constantly at the Priory. Croquet tournaments were annual events between the two families, and meetings were frequent. The Henbury Vicarage of those days, with its hospitable host and hostess, its beautiful situation and unique garden, will always remain in the memories of those who were privileged to enter its inner circle, as the ideal of what a country "parsonage" should be.

There were many other children too, both boys and girls, whom it is impossible to name, and who are taking their part in the great work of the world to-day.

It has already been mentioned that George was particularly noticed by men, even by quite young ones, who wrote to "that nice manly little chap" long, interesting letters. He had been visiting at Torquay in the beginning of 1900, and had there met Bishop Mitchinson, a friend of his father, who was much interested in geology. This kind friend, who was Canon of Gloucester and Master of Pembroke College, Oxford, invited the little boy, with his parents, to visit him at the University in the following May, saying that he would like to give him his first introduction to the historic city. George had always been destined for Cambridge, and there was a joke between them that this visit would wean his affections from the rival branch of learning. During this visit the child was allowed to walk from the College to the Church behind the mace-bearer and between Bishop Mitchinson and Bishop Eden

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of Wakefield, who was to preach the University sermon that year. The Bishops were much amused, for when the Bishop of Wakefield, who said he felt very nervous, jokingly remarked to George, "Perhaps next time you walk behind the man with the poker you will be preaching the sermon yourself," the boy calmly replied, "I should not mind if I were." He explained afterwards that he was not conceited, for he thought grown-up people could always do things properly! Everyone vied with each other in giving him a good time, and he thoroughly enjoyed himself, but so curious is the mind of even a clever child, that in after years he used to say that what lived most in his memory was his feeding the gold-fish in the large pond in the quadrangle of Christ Church College.

In May, 1897, another little sister, Ida Constance Theodora, had been added to the nursery circle, and one day when George was asked the number of his family, he replied, "The usual number." "What is that?" said the enquirer. "Oh! I have noticed that five is a very usual number."

He did not at this time object to his lessons with his boy-loving governess, Miss Skelton, and was even heard one day to announce dolefully when he had an unexpected holiday, "I do miss my lessons so much," but this phase did not last long!

When quite a child he began to write little stories and verses, and was found collecting stamps, not because of their value as stamps, but because he liked "pretty things." Colour always appealed to him, and he was very fond of painting from babyhood.

His mother had begun to gather together a library of children's books when he was quite small, and the schoolroom contained all the best literature for young

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people. He was devoted to reading, one of his favourite books being a paper-covered edition of *Brer Rabbit*, about which there is a funny story. He brought it one day to his mother, saying, "This is a very clever book, and, see—the picture of the author is at the beginning." The "picture" proved to be an advertisement of Pears' soap—"Since then I have used no other" (a very dirty man writing, with a pipe in his mouth). This incident recalls another story of the same picture, told by Harry Furniss, who drew it, of how his little nephews and nieces in a distant continent had put the advertisement up on the walls of their nursery, believing that it really was a portrait of their Uncle Harry!

Any account of George's early life would be incomplete without a mention of Charanté, Torquay, where his father's four unmarried sisters lived, and where they always warmly welcomed their many nephews and nieces. Mr. Whidborne loved Torquay, which had been his home[1] before he had married, and where, in 1895, he had saved some of the most lovely parts from destruction by buying them when they had been threatened by the builders. He often took his family there, and they enjoyed it as much as he did. The kind aunts gave George lovely toys in his childhood, tips and hampers in his boyhood, and in his manhood helped him with many of his larger pleasures. Above all, through life they influenced him for good by giving him their interest, their friendship and their prayers.

The following extracts from their letters will show what a charming place their house was for their little guests when, as sometimes happened, they went there without their parents:

[1] See *The Old Gateway*, by Mrs. Marshall, for description of Ilsh m.

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"The five are very well and joyful. I had George and Charlie for companions round the town this morning, to the great diversion of the tradespeople. Once when I was doubtful about taking Charlie into a shop with me, he settled the question by observing solemnly, 'I don't think I are to be trusted alone.' They certainly are very engaging people. . . . They went out to tea, and Charlie informed the host that he meant to stay for two or three days!

"I was telling George at lunch that there was going to be a baptism, and he convulsed poor Clarke by stating that he thought a font should be called a pond. . . . They have had rather an un-improving Sunday, I am afraid, but we *did* look at a Sunday picture book. They have been speculating as to whether there will be teas in Heaven, and Charlie assured me that there would be 'crowns and robes and harps and nuffin else!'"

Mr. and Mrs. Whidborne went for a long tour in Italy and the East in the spring of 1898, and the letters they wrote home were very much enjoyed and carefully kept by their children. Later in the same year George travelled with them through Scotland, paying a succession of visits.

The love of travel came as a heritage to him from all sides; there was hardly a branch of his "forebears" who had not lived much in foreign countries from choice, and during his short life George was able to gratify this desire to wander, which is so marked in some families. His love of *solitary* travel was characteristic—unlike his other brothers and sisters, who were never happy unless they were with one of their own family.

George was always very clever at repartee, and one

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old gentleman, Mr. Lombe, spent his whole visit in trying to get a "rise" out of the small boy. "What is the difference between a pig and a porcupine?" said he one day. Soon came the prompt reply: "A porcupine is a pig with prickles."

When asked what the word "prior" meant, he answered, "One who examines closely"—the definition of "prier" in Butler's spelling book, which he had learned weeks before—and so on; he would not be cornered.

Public events now began to arouse his loyalty. Festivities for various Royal occasions took place in the Priory grounds and in those of the neighbouring place, which belonged to Sir Robert Symes, who was Lord Mayor of Bristol for five years in succession. He and his wife, now dead, were devoted admirers of the Priory children, and indulged them at every opportunity. Whenever a fête took place at Westbury the Priory grounds were requisitioned, and on several occasions the fences were removed between the two properties and "whirly-go-rounds" made horrible noises all day and late into the night, an affliction to those with sensitive ears but a source of delight to the small people.

On another occasion there was a review on the Downs when, during the great excitement caused by the *feu de joie*, the horses that had been taken out of the carriages in which the onlookers sat, stampeded at the noise. And then in the evening there was the drive through the brilliantly-illuminated city, ending up with the Suspension Bridge, which was decorated with fairy lights! What could children desire more? But on the return home, at an hour which seemed to them like the middle of the night, there was still the ascent up the dark turret stairs into the little glass "lantern" on

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the roof, from whence they hoped to see some wonderful blazing bonfires, but which, like most bonfires, were very disappointing.

Another Royal event was a visit from Queen Victoria, but it is to be feared that the children thought their friend the Lord Mayor more interesting than the Queen, who, George said, "sat so low in the carriage." The Prince and Princess of Wales also drove through Clifton, and the death of the good and great Queen during that terrible winter of 1900-1901 made a great impression on the patriotism of the small people. Later on they went to London for the expected Coronation of King Edward. The boys were at school at the time, but it was decided that, in spite of the King's illness and the apprehensions it raised, they should, as arranged, go to London, where their family already was, Mr. Alexander Strong, Mrs. Whidborne's stepfather, having lent them his house in South Kensington. It was a curious contrast to see large parties of young people visiting the Zoo and other places of amusement with evident enjoyment, whilst the older people were carrying about with them a constant dread of what the future might have in store. The big city was in a state of "half-dead" festivity, but possibly the memory of the King's illness will remain in the minds of those children as a greater event than even his coronation would have done. When he was crowned later it was found impossible to re-visit London, but the boys' grandparents having received invitations for the Abbey, they heard first-hand accounts of that wonderful ceremony.

The public event, however, which stirred up the deepest patriotism in the children of those days was "the war."

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It was undoubtedly the Boer War which gave George and Charlie the earliest desire to make the Army their profession. Curiously this was not shared by the youngest brother, who said he wished "to be of some use in the world," and that he might get killed in his first battle if he were a soldier. There is a pretty photograph, a prophetical portrait one might say, taken about this time, of the three brothers in toy-soldiers' uniform. In it George is seen wearing a German helmet, and the fact was noted with much interest when the great war began in 1914. Hundreds of little tin warriors lived in the Priory schoolroom at that time, and many a fallen hero was returned to the ranks after receiving surgical treatment with matches and sealing-wax from their mother, the doctor of the army. "Down with the French" was a notice hung up in the schoolroom, which had to be speedily removed before the advent of the "Mademoiselle" from Clifton, eliciting the information that Charlie had not been allowed to put "Down with the Boers," like his elder brother, and thought that this would be equally warlike. Their uncle, Roland Chambers, was fighting with the voluntary army at the Cape, and the long letters which came home from his wife (who, with her children, had bravely remained at their home, "Middlemount," in the Colony, through the whole war in order to prevent its destruction) were weekly excitements.

The boys were brought up with very little punishment. It is possible that George would have worked harder had his father been more severe with him, but he could never long be angry with this son, who had such a very special place in his heart. There was one good thing about this bringing up, that the children in after years looked back to their childhood with happi-

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ness, and always considered their home the brightest spot in the world. They regarded their father with great respect as a fount of knowledge.

"Are you clever enough to know on which day of the week Adam and Eve were born?" and "Were there drains in the time of the flood?" were conundrums put by one small rogue. "If God wished that bear to be a rug, why did He not make it a rug at once?" was another.

The problems of Eternity and of a broken toy were equally brought to their parents, from whom the children were always sure of a ready sympathy.

The letters to the boys from their young uncles at this time were so charming that it seems a pity not to give some specimens of them.

From Uncle Bertram at Sea.

Dear George and Charlie,

I fear I have been a very wicked uncle not to write to you sooner, and even now I have to write on an ugly plain bit of paper without a big ship's crest to set it off. But you see there are no shops here to buy things—only the great blue open sea all around. I am afraid there is not enough room on this piece of paper to tell you all the strange things that I have seen since I went away from England over three years ago, but if you are good boys and do just what Mother tells you, I shall have any number of stories for you when I come back, and perhaps I shall find some pretty things packed away in my box from the other side of the world, and marked "For good boys only." I don't suppose Charlie will remember me at all, but I shall expect George to remember his Uncle Bertram, and not be at all frightened or shy, and you will both have to make

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friends with me at once. The ship is hurrying along at eleven miles an hour, that is just three times as fast as you could walk, so that it will only be a week or two after you get this before I shall be home again in dear old England. I expect you don't half know what a nice place England is to live in, and you would like to go about the world and see all the queer things in it for yourselves, but some day you will know that there is no place like England.

Now, dear boys, good-bye. With love, from Uncle

BERTRAM.

When their sailor uncle did come home, George went down to Portsmouth to meet him, and had a delightful visit to his ship.

From UNCLE MARCUS.

(With a Xmas present.)

DEAR NEPHEWS,

Be good boys on Christmas Day, and don't quarrel or eat too much, and you will have a happy day.

From your Uncle,

MARCUS.

From UNCLE THEODORE.

(Written carefully in beautiful large capitals.)

DEAR GEORGE,

Thank you so much for your letter. I hope that you are having a real good time at Westbury. I wish that I was with you to run about the garden, too, but I am hard at work now like a nigger. Did you have a comfortable journey to Bristol? I hope dear little baby sister Rita was good, and that you and

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Charlie did set her a good example. Did she squeal at all? Are there any squirrels at Westbury like the ones we saw at Kew last Saturday? I am sure there is not such a nice pagoda. Now I must leave off writing.

With love.

Your affectionate Uncle,

THEODORE.

Their Uncle Rupert at Marlborough wrote:

"I hope you will always be good with your governess and never make her angry with you, and work very hard, so that you may get on well when you grow up and come to a big school like Marlborough."

In September, 1900, the boys were sent to school at Coombe Down, near Bath, as their father wished them to be within easy reach of home. He often bicycled over to see them. They spent part of their first holidays at Charanté, and one of their aunts wrote: "George is a dear boy and so conscientious, he has been trying to be unselfish. I think it means more to him than to many children, because he cares so much about things—he always lets Charlie have first turn if there is a choice." And again she writes later, when a new sister, "Edith Victoria Elfrida," had arrived, thus making three boys and three girls: "I should think the symmetry of your pretty little family will suit George's ideas of what a family ought to be." She visits at Monkton Coombe, and reports: "Two demure little boys in Eton suits walked in gravely to luncheon today. . . . The football match yesterday came to an untimely end, as a boy broke his leg. He had fifteen visitors yesterday, and 'that,' said George solemnly, 'was a good thing, as he slept so well after it!' . . .

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I thought George much developed, little phrases come quite naturally to him, which are not what a small boy generally uses. Mr. E. (the master) says 'both are clever and well-grounded, but George is remarkable.'"

In 1903 it was decided to leave the Priory. The once pretty village of Westbury-on-Trym was fast becoming a suburb of Bristol, and the fields round about were being swallowed up in bricks and mortar. The Priory itself would have to go before long, and therefore, in spite of all their happy associations, George's parents decided to move before their children grew older. Mr. Whidborne had found plenty of work to do in Bristol, but the journeys to London, where he had so many interests, were, he found, irksome, and he wished to be within easier reach. After a short search, he saw and finally bought the beautiful estate of Hammerwood, near Ashdown Forest, in Sussex.

One of the many advantages the family now gained was that of having a charming and congenial Vicar, the Rev. Clement Woodland, who gave a warm welcome to the brother clergyman who was to be his Squire, and who was ready to help him in any way possible. George shared in this satisfaction, and the sermon, instead of being a weekly penance, as heretofore, to one of his active disposition, became a pleasure.

The boy at this time, with his pink cheeks, blue eyes, brown hair and bright alert look, dressed in his pale grey flannel suit, was an ideal English child, and won all hearts when he arrived at his new home. He and Mr. Woodland became fast friends, their mutual pursuits making a bond between them, and George's grief at his death a few years later was very deep.

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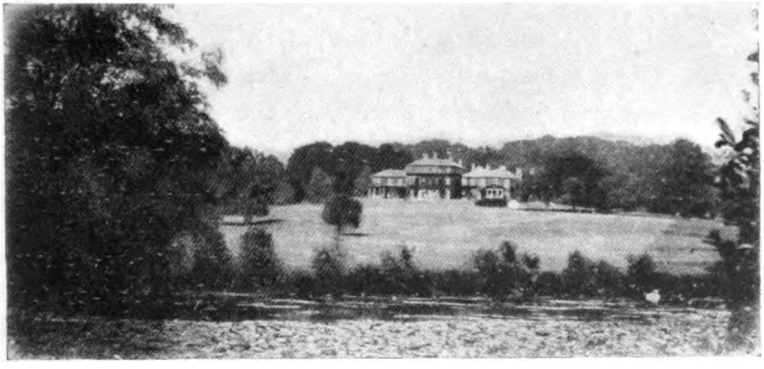

HAMMERWOOD

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CHAPTER II

SCHOOLDAYS

ST. ANDREW'S—HARROW

At Christmas, 1901, the boys left Coombe Down, as it did not agree very well with their health, and went to the Rev. Reginald Bull, St. Andrew's, Southborough, to prepare for Harrow.

When the family moved to Sussex, George and Charlie thoroughly appreciated being so near their home, and their parents constantly came over to the school to see them. Mr. and Mrs. Bull were extremely hospitable, and the boys under their care had a very happy time. Mrs. Bull, with her clever and vigorous spirit, was a real "help-meet" to her husband, and together they watched over and drew out all that was best in the children committed to their charge.

During the first year at St. Andrew's George developed rapidly. His earlier letters are written in round hand, and composed of single sentences, but by the end of 1902 he gives quite long accounts of events, and they are copiously illustrated.

A love of flowers was marked all through his life, and he received gardening prizes at both his preparatory schools. He finds "a white orchid," and relates that one boy is making "an Artesian Well" in his garden.

His descriptive powers increase: "This morning,

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while I was dressing, a little bird came and sat on the roof beneath my cubicle window, it was a pretty little bird—very tame—there were only about eight inches between us. It was between the size of a wren and a young robin—more the size of a wren. It had a yellowish green front and a greeny back and head, with a little brown in the green, and blackish tips to its wings."

He shoots "three goals," and begins to become interested in games. With cricket he was rather successful, one report on him being: "Promises to become a first-rate wicketkeeper; takes the ball well on either side." This promise was not followed up in after-life. When he arrived at Harrow eight of the new boys had been wicketkeepers at their previous schools, and George could not bear the inactivity of other places in the field.

Football was always his delight, and his letters are full of long accounts of matches—often two closely-written sheets.

Of course, the great topic of the letters is the new home in Sussex. To a boy of twelve the idea of a country house with shooting must ever appeal, and to George and his brothers and sisters the excitement of the new surroundings speedily allayed the pangs that the leave-takings of old associations had caused them.

Their mutual love of Natural History formed a strong bond between George and his father. The boy would spend a whole afternoon in a tree, watching the habits of some bird or beast, and he writes: "I am sending a picture of a green woodpecker, which I did yesterday evening. I thought it might do to face 'Woodpecker at work in the Hammer Wood.' Please do not put it in the book if you do not like it, I should

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not mind. The tree was very hard, as I did not know how to make rough bark."

He comments on the "kingfisher," "hawfinch" and "black rabbit," which his father has seen; describes the places most minutely where nests are and where eggs will be found.

"Mr. Bing" (a favourite master) "has got two golden-crested wrens' eggs—they are the prettiest, delicatest and smallest eggs that I have seen. . . . I do envy you at times, not because of all the people in the house (I do not like that, because I have to be so awfully clean and tidy and in time for meals) but because I do want to see the new ducks and pheasants." (Peculiar breeds, which his father hoped would eventually pair with the wild ones in the woods.)

Mr. Whidborne was anxious that his boys should collect their moths and butterflies in a scientific way, as he had done himself, but although they were interested in catching them and made quite good collections for small boys, they never continued them after they left St. Andrew's.

George always gained distinction in essays on Natural History: "A lecturer, Mr. Westall, came and showed us some lovely lantern slides of birds, taken from life. He offered prizes of his own books for the best essays, entitled 'Half-hours with the Birds.'"

George gained the second place, and states:

"I would have got first prize if my writing had been better. I was in such a hurry that I could not write well."

We also read in one of the school magazines:

"Among our visitors this term was a kind old gentleman (the founder of the 'Church Society for the Promotion of Kindness to Animals'), who has put everything on one side in order to devote the last years

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of his life wholly to the cause of promoting kindness to animals. . . . According to our custom, a resumé of Mr. Lawrence's two addresses was written out by every boy, and the best essays were sent to be criticised by a friend of his, who, with the approval of the Society's Committee, adjudged four prizes."

Of these Whidborne won the first. He also received a medal for an essay on kindness to animals, given by the Duchess of Portland. Even when love of sport overcame the extreme tenderness of his character, he was always most careful not to allow any sort of cruelty.

It is interesting to note, in view of his after love of hunting, that in one of his essays he speaks of fox-hunting as a "healthy amusement."

In the autumn of 1903 he began to learn to shoot under the gamekeeper, Parker, and all his older friends and relations took an immense interest in the prowess of the small boy. At an early age his father, who did not himself shoot, gave him more or less the command of the shoots, and his unselfishness and tact in dealing with the arrangement of the "guns" was often commented on.

Mr. Whidborne was very particular that his boys should be careful about anything connected with fire-arms, and as a result George never did any of those foolish things that alarm people when out with half-taught sportsmen.

His name, as time went on, began to enter more frequently into the school magazine; his "pencil drawings" of the holiday task "show considerable promise," and there is an account of poetry learnt and recited:

"Whidborne spoke his pieces clearly and with much feeling and intelligence."

He and his brothers took part in the beautiful

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Pastoral Plays, which were features of the summer terms at St. Andrew's, where the shady gardens and large swimming bath were so much enjoyed in the hot weather.

There is a good deal of quiet humour in his remarks on masters, boys and events, which make his letters more interesting reading than those of most boys at his age.

"There are four new boys—very funny ones—but I think new boys always are very funny."

"I am now quite high up in the school" comes soon after this criticism.

He began to take part in debates and votes for "Men of Action" as being of more use to England than "Men of Thought." He writes, after a debate on Mary, Queen of Scots:

"The boys speaking for the motion would have liked to say 'murder' instead of 'execution.' I was speaking for the opposition, and I was determined not to read my speech, so I tore up my notes beforehand."

Then come two drawings:

"1. This is me delivering my speech!

"2. This is the boy on the other side, snubbed by me in my speech! The motion was won by eleven votes, but we did not mind, as we had all the masters on our side."

A "General Knowledge" paper does not produce an example of his best style of poetry, though it is amusing as showing how conservative he was; he was told to write eight lines of poetry to his favourite animal:

"I put,

"To a Pig.

"Oh, thou that gruntest in the sty,
To-morrow thou wilt be pork-pie—

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And that is why I look so sad,
For thou art such a noble lad (pig!).

"Thou art not fit for butchers' knives,
Thou ought'st to come with me for drives
Instead of lying in a sty
Tormented by that awful fly."

The point of this lay in the fact that he had adopted the pig as his favourite animal when as a small child he had been reprimanded in the nursery for using it as an opprobrious term to his younger brothers.

Little Seymour, the youngest boy, followed his brothers to St. Andrew's, and we find George writing thoughtfully about his welfare: "Will you let Seymour be more with me and Charlie in the holidays, as it will harden him a bit for school." And again: "Remind Seymour to work awfully hard at his sums before coming here"—and when the little fellow did go, he made a very easy *debût* under his kind brothers. In order to ease his mother's mind, George wrote full details, and ends: "Charlie and I have been hard at work looking after Seymour. I think next week he will be able to help himself a bit more. He is very happy, and much pleased at having gone up one place this week."

There is an account of a lecture on the Boer War, always a favourite subject with him, by Lieutenant Clarke:

"It was splendid, though the pictures were not like those in the 'Illustrated'—arms and legs flying in all directions and beautiful shells falling gracefully in the right places. There was a photo-slide of a very modern battle, in which no one could be seen and not a single shell—just long lines of trenches. He told us a nice

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little story of how one night they were aroused by the furious cackling of some geese they had bought for Christmas, and found that they were surrounded by a party of Boers. They were awakened just in time, and would otherwise have been killed or taken prisoner. It reminds one of the old story of the saving of the Capitol of Ancient Rome, when attacked by the Gauls."

One can see here the beginnings of the soldier's spirit, which were stirred in him later, although, at this time, he had some thoughts of taking Holy Orders, chiefly to please his parents, who, however, never tried to bias him in any way.

George had a more than ordinary fear of anything like hypocrisy in religion, and in consequence seldom showed his deeper feelings, but hearing that his mother would be away for part of the holidays owing to the illness of a relation, he valiantly tries to fill her place:

"I will take Bible-reading in the morning if you like; it will be good practice, and I should not mind with only the others at all, at least, not so much as reading the Lessons in Chapel on Sunday." This ordeal he had described as "not so bad, when once you are at the reading-desk." He felt the same sensation when in after years he read the Lessons in Hammerwood Church.

His nervous temperament often gave him great trouble in life. Owing to a hereditary tendency to sleeplessness during the first part of the night, he was apt to wake tired in the morning, and this affected his studies. He was not strong, and though exciting circumstances would carry him through great exertion even for a long time, he always suffered for it afterwards.

His lesson reports were generally disappointing. Showing so much talent in some ways, his masters

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expected more from him than he cared to achieve. He was always "going to work harder," but "life" was so engrossing a pursuit to him, with his active brain, that "mere lesson books" were extremely uninteresting in comparison!

Like his father, George had a keen sense of justice, which sometimes brought him into collision with those masters who did not understand his character. One of these had, as he thought, been unfair to his brother, and also to him for taking his part. He had made him lose a mark, which he thought would prevent his gaining a Conduct Prize, on which he had set his heart, and George was very angry about it all. His father had evidently advised him to apologise to the master, and he writes: "I could not beg that master's pardon now, it would look like 'sucking up' in order to be let off, which would be a beastly thing to do." This was a strong trait in George's character, he would never let anyone think him better than he was, and consequently he sometimes appeared more to blame than was really the case.

His time at St. Andrew's came to an end in July, 1904, as he was entered for the Grove, Harrow, for the following term. Mr. Bull had a close connection with Harrow, and as the two other brothers were remaining some time longer at St. Andrew's, his career was followed with interest by those who had loved him at his preparatory school. Some of his letters from the Front afterwards appeared in the school magazine, and when he was awarded the Military Cross a holiday was given in honour of the event.

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HARROW, 1904-1908

Up to this time the children had been singularly free from the saddening shadow which the constant deaths of older relations throws over some young lives, but henceforward such partings were to become more frequent. In November, 1904, after a long illness, George's beloved uncle and godfather, Major Elverson, died at Dover. He was a man of unusual charm of manner, combined with great Christian influence, and was much missed. He left six children, of whom the eldest, James, was just entering on his military career. There was a unique bond between George and this cousin; both were left at almost the same age in responsible positions; both had been at Harrow; both had the same love of sport and poetry, and both as boys thought Hammerwood the most beautiful place in the world.

The sorrow of the older members of the family at this loss was augmented by another trouble at this time. Quite by chance it was found out, in the middle of George's first term at Harrow, that the boy was most unhappy in his new life. His house-master was ill, and the smaller boys were under the tyranny of one or two older ones, who were exerting a very bad influence over them, with the worst results. Of the younger boys "Little Whidborne" alone had the courage to stand out against things which he felt to be wrong—not, as he said, because he had even heard of some of them before, but because the principles on which he had been brought up at home and at his private school instinctively came to his rescue, and he was brave enough to act on them.

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Those who have had to deal with similar circumstances will realise what a purgatory the small boy endured, and he was never again quite the same as he had been when, for the first time, he encountered sin in its coarser forms. He said later on, with a fuller knowledge of the world, that he felt that he had then taken the right course in the matter.

Letters from those who knew what he was suffering cheered him up, and they show signs of having been read and re-read. His youngest uncle, who had been head of another house at Harrow not long before, helped him greatly with his advice as to how to deal with these difficult circumstances, and one of the leading boys in the school took an interest in him, and kept up a correspondence with him for the rest of his life.

In later days, when he heard that George had won the Military Cross, this boy wrote to his own people, saying "he was a hero at Harrow"; and to Mrs. Whidborne, after his friend's death, as follows:

"India.

"I see from the newspaper that your son George, after winning the Military Cross for his gallantry, has died of wounds. To anyone who knew him at school there is nothing surprising in his gallantry. I have often thought that if I were asked to say what was the most courageous piece of behaviour I had ever witnessed, I should select his behaviour as a small boy at Harrow, when he stuck to his guns without a friend in the house to back him up. I am happy therefore to think that his courage has at last won some recognition. . . . You know, no doubt, all that your son put up with at Harrow and all the courage that he dis-

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played on that occasion, but as I thought that perhaps you did not know that there were others also who remember it and who have thought more of it than he ever did himself, I have taken the liberty of writing to you to express to you my sympathy in your loss."

George's letters this first term were very pathetic. Without in any way grumbling about his troubles, there is a sad vein running through them, which greatly worried those who knew that he was naturally of such a happy, easy-going disposition. In this term also he wrote a wonderful and closely-written epistle of several pages to his younger brothers, giving a detailed description of Harrow and breathing a passionate yearning for them and for his former surroundings.

When he returned home for the Christmas holidays, so great was the change in him that his parents decided that if matters were not improved in the following term they would at once remove their son, although they wished him to remain if possible, knowing it would be better for the future of other boys. It was a great relief, therefore, when a postcard arrived, after his return to school at the beginning of 1905, saying: "Am getting on quite well, had a ripping time so far"—followed by a letter: "I feel a good bit 'stronger,'[1] and I have had no occasion not to feel so. All your worry and trouble through the end of last term have made a lot of difference. I have enjoyed the 'footer' so far very much."

During the holidays the house-master had acted with

[1] The word "stronger" referred to the following lines, which were a great comfort to him:

"Be strong, we are not here to dream, to drift;
We have hard work to do, and loads to lift;
Shun not the struggle—face it—'tis God's gift."

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wisdom and decision, and on George's return to Harrow after Christmas the bad influence had been removed, and no one knew that it was through George. The new boys little realised that they owed their calm entrance into public school life to the careless, football-loving Whidborne, who had, now that the "terror" was removed, returned more or less to his ordinary cheerfulness.

Several years afterwards, when told of the affair, one of the boys who had been in the house that term said that if the change in the house was due to George, the whole house owed him a great debt of gratitude.

His talent for drawing speedily obtained recognition from the extremely kind and painstaking art master, who always took a warm interest in him through his school career.

"He shows unusual keenness, fine and sensitive feeling, and very distinct power of drawing."

"He is attempting somewhat difficult subjects in quick sketches from the life; his work shows more intelligence, and after another term excellent results are anticipated," are reports in 1905.

George was a good letter writer, but apparently he never kept up a correspondence with anyone but his mother. Before his father died, his letters always began "Dear Father and Mother," and as his parents' letters to him were always answered impartially, first to one and then to the other, there was occasional confusion!

Home correspondence is one of the best safeguards that a boy can have, and even the handwriting is an index to character, which enlightened parents can read. When letters home are omitted, something is to be feared! George's rather lengthy epistles—of which, of

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course, only extracts can be given—really convey a better idea of Harrow life than most of the stories of that school. His hopes and fears for matches, his telling requests for financial help, his affectionate remembrances of home, and his accounts of the events of the week at school were all put in an unusually interesting way.

In 1905 he writes:

"I am doing Natural History this term about vertebrates and invertebrates and the insides of animals; it is awfully interesting, and I get top marks for mine."

"We shall miss the big oak at first, I expect, but it will be ripping having another tennis lawn. I should have liked to have seen it come down. You ought to keep a section sawn off the bottom as a curiosity. There are lots of rings, I expect; you might fix it on a tripod and make a tea-table of it? It evidently was dying, for there were hardly any leaves on it last summer."

"I want some money. Is it you or mother who sends it?"

The constant requests for money did not at this age mean great extravagance. The boys preferred having it sent to them during the term for what they considered the daily necessities of school life, and they were allowed to have it on stating for what it was required, instead of taking back a large sum at the beginning of the term. They certainly made full use of this privilege!

"Thanks awfully for the money. Last week a chap in Davidson's, Clutterbuck, who was in my cricket game, got very bad 'pendicitis and died, and now another boy is very ill and was prayed for in Chapel this morning. I do hope he will get better; it will be awful if he dies. We used to play Clutterbuck's

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'private' at St. Andrew's, and I remember his playing quite well; he was an awfully decent chap. It is beastly when these things happen. We had an awfully good memorial sermon by Dr. Woods, and the funeral march by Chopin. It is awful and grand, but I do like the notes of triumph in it.

"Have you found anything for me to ride next hols.? you can't think how I enjoyed the riding I got last hols. I hope the pony will be a bit higher than the last one. I shall enjoy it! Last night I dreamt I was riding a thorough-bred, which went like the wind and jumped beautifully, but I awoke to find that there was no chance of the dream being a reality!

"May I give my oldest pair of boots (I have three pairs, and shan't be able to wear the oldest again) to the boy at the art school? It would save giving him a tip, and would be a good way of getting rid of the boots!

"I like Craven (a boy who had been with him at St. Andrew's, and who became a life-long friend) very much. I don't know how he likes me; at any rate he bears with me, which is more than some people do! Thanks awfully for all the flowers you send; you can't think how much I enjoy them. They are little bits of home and the country in my room. You know my window won't open at the bottom because of the fire-escape; I unscrewed the screws and opened it, as it was so hot, and sat on the sill (quite safe) . . . G. cobbed me (or rather he heard that boys had been out, and I owned up). There is rather a row; I don't know what will happen. Nothing much! Perhaps nothing!

"I have found a weekly paper which I have settled to take in for the rest of the term—it is only a penny a week, and is awfully decent. It will, however, be only

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interesting to father, although mother may like the pictures of the birds (there, I have given its subject away now!). The first volume only came out on the 1st of May, so I got the back numbers. I will send you one directly to see how you like it. There are photos of birds, eggs, caterpillars and moths, and that is why I like it, because it combines birds with butterflies. It also puts in strange things that have been seen, such as rabbits taking to water (a rabbit had been seen swimming across the lake at Hammerwood). I have paid 1/2 for the rest of the term. This is the letter which ought to have come to you the Sunday before last!"

The summer holidays were spent at a little place called Paris Plage, on the French coast, close to the growing golfing centre of Le Touquet. At that time it was an ideal place for children, though the bathing was not very good and the accommodation was very primitive. The wild pine woods at the back of the town were very healthy, and afforded a splendid playground for the children when it was too hot for the beach.

The English boys were a great trouble to the men who watched over the bathers, and the little horn that warned people that they were going out too far was constantly blown on their behalf. George laid the foundation of his French speaking there; foreign maids had been of little use, but now he really did make progress in the language, the knowledge of which he found invaluable later on. How little he thought that the next time he would stay at Le Touquet would be during a great European War!

He had felt keenly the separation from his brother, and in the Autumn of 1905 Charlie joined him at the

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Grove, but, sad to say, towards the end of the first term they had one of the few "serious quarrels" of their lives—for "Charlie will not remember that I have been here a year longer than he." The quarrel was speedily made up, however, and a joint letter written home:

From CHARLIE.

MY DEAREST MOTHER AND FATHER,

We are awfully sorry about quarrelling. We made it up together on Monday. I thought you would be very sorry when you heard. None of the others knew anything about it. Thank you very much for the postal order; we were in need of some money. I am doing a lot of drawing. Please don't be unhappy about us any more, because we have made it up and settled not to quarrel any more this term, and we are getting on very well. I will write again on Sunday.

(In George's handwriting.)

Love from

CHARLIE.

DEAR MOTHER AND FATHER,

There was no blood shed. I am sorry I made you sick; I was a fool to send that letter.

Love from

GEORGE.

The military instinct was aroused further during this term:

"We had an awfully good lecture on the Siege of Port Arthur. There were a lot of photos of battle-fields, with corpses piled one on top of the other, so

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that you could not walk along without treading on them."

POSTCARD.

Please may I join the Cadet Corps? I was inspired to join by the sermon to-night, when they said one ought to do one's duty to one's country by joining.

I should like to join awfully.

Please may I?

Please write directly—*directly*.

Love from

GEORGE.

"Thanks awfully for leave to join. A new uniform costs £5, but I shall try to get a second-hand one."

He ends the year with his usual enthusiasm about football:

"I hope you are glad to hear that I played for the House on Saturday, and we won and are now in for the cock-house match, and if we win that, O . . .!!"

Whilst at Harrow George's life was uneventful, except for the usual home and school interests, but his letters, with their descriptions of games and lectures, and their requests about food, money and clothes will be appreciated by the present, past and future Harrovians of his acquaintance.

For the next two or three years the Whidborne children had an ideal life during the holidays, with a constant succession of boy and girl visitors, and with plenty of shooting and tennis in their seasons.

The following doggerel rhyme, written in one of the children's albums, in which everyone had to write something original, expresses the "carelessly happy"

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atmosphere of their home at this period of their existence:

"HAPPY HAMMERWOOD.

"There is a house that stands four-square
To meet the sun all day,
And people who are staying there
Forget to go away!
It's full of toys, and girls and boys,
And all of them are good,
And fun and play go on all day
At Happy Hammerwood!"

At school the boys were also perfectly happy. Unfortunately a "perfectly happy" boy is often an idle one, especially when he puts as much energy into games as George did. He was growing very rapidly—his measurements showing an increase of four inches during one year—and he suffered from neuralgic pains all his life when over-tired. He would put too much energy into his football, and then find he was too much exhausted to put his mind into his work.

In a letter from his house-master's wife, in the Easter term, 1906, when writing about one of these "neuralgic chills," she says: "It is so kind of you to tell us how happy George is, and we are so thankful that the boy can feel like that after his trying start. He gets on famously now, and is very popular. No doubt he gets 'overdone' sometimes, for he plays hard and is one of our best 'Torpids.'"

He now began to make his mark as a football player, being mentioned in the school magazine as a "conspicuous worker," "very good," and so on. His uncle, an old Harrovian, wrote:

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"It is most delightful to see George's name in those cuttings out of the *Harrovian*—evidently the Captain has a high idea of his capacity, or he would not take the trouble to mention his play: it means you have got a good reputation when you are put in like that. . . . I wrote to George *re* his Confirmation, but tore it up!"

After all, a letter was written, which George answered as follows:

The Grove.

DEAR UNCLE EUSTACE,

Forgive! There is nothing to forgive, only to thank you for your letter, which contained exactly what I most needed. . . . There was something in yours that was particularly helpful. You seemed to "touch the spot" better than any book. Thanks awfully for thinking about me just now. As you say, if I can only follow in mother and father's footsteps and believe what they believe, I shall do all right; and I can only pray that I may be overcome by no temptations to the contrary.

I am afraid that my letter must be very short, as I have several more to write.

I was third in the House half-mile, and got the under sixteen high and long jump, and am in the final heat of the hurdles. Thanks awfully.

Ever your nephew,

GEORGE.

He was confirmed in the School Chapel on the 3rd of April.

On the 22nd February of the same year the boys took part in a Public School Volunteer Field-Day, when 3500 boys carried out a scheme of field operations at Aldershot, and were reviewed by the then Sir John French.

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George had now entered on his second summer term at Harrow, and his uncle, who was extremely anxious that his nephew should do well at cricket, wrote:

"May 20th, 1906.

"George's letters are most interesting, and make me simply yearn to be back again once more at Harrow—they seem to contain the scent of 2Va ground and West Street and cricket bill and Sunday evening when the letters are collected. I like to think of Charlie as a 'seconder'—I played 'seconders' all my five years, and my last year we won the cup! Please ask George how many other games the field man had to get through when going after his 'fiver.' George's idea of sending all his letters by telephone is lovely (the telephone had just been installed at Hammerwood, and George had suggested using it instead of writing letters—M.W.). I am extremely glad that he got his remove—that will mean the 5th form after Christmas, and the 6th the year after that if he bucks up.

"I hope you have *not* given the general order at Smith's (the tailor which George had asked for)—it's only a matter of two days getting an order from you, and a very good restraining influence."

The Harrow boys loved flowers; most of them kept pots of them on their tables, and hot-house flowers were in great request. George writes, May, 1906: "You can't imagine how much pleasure they give, not only us, but the big chaps. Those deep red carnations are A.1, and are great favourites in the house, as they are the house colours—the orchids, too, for it is a very distinguished buttonhole to wear an orchid such as that purple one, or the yellow carnation. Why, I expect

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that spray of two orchids would have cost 1/- or 2/- at Emstens. It makes one long to be a 'three-yearer.'"

"I have got into second Vth A in cricket; it is about the fourth best game in the school. I got a bat. I hope you don't mind, but you must have proper things if you get into a good game. Everybody below the 2nd Remove have to fag in batches of four at the 6th form game nets, and 'three yearers' and 'caps' are put over them as 'slave-drivers,' that is to say, to see that they go, and I have been made 'slave-driver,' though I am not even a 'two-yearer,' and certainly not a 'cap.' I am going to sweat my cricket a lot this term.

"It is as hard for me to make 25 runs as for Charlie to make 75 in 'Seconders,' I should think.

"I have some good news for you, which I expect Uncle Eustace will be glad to hear. I am twelfth man for the house at cricket in the first house match. I do wish M—— did not keep wicket. If he did not I should do it."

In this letter is the request for the "general order" for clothes, written in his most persuasive style. He also says: "I do hope you will like my new waistcoat. I don't think it is bad."

The phase of being rather over particular about his clothes lasted for several years, though he was never what is known as "foppish." He found out in time that the best dressed men are not too perfectly attired.

It was always difficult to persuade him to be photographed, but he gave way to please his mother, and some copies were sent to him.

"They were all 'bagged' as soon as someone found them, and I had to go round and sign them. Several people wanted to know where the photographer lived, as they said he was very flattering. I wish you liked

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them as much as they do, since you are the chief person."

The boys returned home for the "Lords" exeat to find that a new little sister, "Hilda Rosabel," had been added to the family. As she was nearly six years younger than the last baby, she caused much interest to her brothers and sisters. George's letter to his father and mother, after hearing of her arrival, was characteristic:

"I was so excited when I read your letter I hardly knew what to do. I am frightfully excited for the exeat at 'Lords.' I am simply longing to see mother and our baby. I do want to see the round-faced, blue-eyed, auburn-haired (was there anything else you said?) beauty. I am sure she must be a pretty baby if she is mother's. Are babies born blind, like kittens, or can they see straight away? When will she be christened? Will you wait till the exeat? How much ought the baby to weigh?

"To-day at the Joyces, I said, 'How old is baby?' So they said, 'Six months and two days.' Then I said, 'I have a little sister six months younger than yours,' and they were awfully pleased. . . . Love to all, especially to mother and the baby."

He wrote after the longed-for Lord's exeat:

"It was ripping to see the baby. Between you and me and the lamp-post, I think she is very pretty, though don't tell her so, for it might make her vain."

He was very full of his art.

"I have painted a fire-crested wren, which I think you will like. Do you remember some rice paper you gave me some time ago? I am doing a 'swallow-tail' on it, and it ought to look rather nice." (Both bird and butterfly were exquisitely painted.—M. W.)

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He could hardly bring himself to go to "camp" at Aldershot, so anxious was he to reach home; but he did go, and enjoyed it.

When he arrived home for the holidays, looking so bronzed and handsome in his khaki, he rushed up to the nursery, and it was a pretty sight to see the schoolboy soldier with the little baby, his future godchild, in his arms.

The holidays were spent at Hammerwood, and he writes on his return to school: "Charlie and I are the same age, but we shall not be so to-morrow, for I shall be sixteen.

"I have been sweating awfully hard this term, but I was so low to start with that I am afraid I shall not come out very high, and my maths. pull me down. . . . I am doing about electricity this term.

"Please thank Uncle Eustace for writing to Charles Eyre,[1] telling him to 'pun' me, he is very swetty though very nice.

"I had some money for the field day. We had a fairly good day, only no firing, as our section were reserves. We went to Hatfield Park, where Lord Salisbury lives, and had tea in the Riding Schools. After tea, Lady Salisbury said that we (the two corps, Harrow and Eton) might go over the house.[2] It was a ripping place, and is full of Elizabethan memories. In one room there are some half dozen portraits of Elizabeth in various costumes. In another an armchair in which she sat to attend chapel, and a footstool and rug on which she placed her feet! There was a ripping

[1] His master and his uncle's friend, killed during the war (in the 2nd K.R.R.).

[2] Hatfield House was burnt down in 1835, the then Lady Salisbury perishing in the flames.

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little lady-chapel, roped off from the corridor and round the top, boxes like theatre boxes, where the Lords and Ladies attended. All the floors were parquet, and the stairs, even in the servants' quarters, were solid oak, with oak banisters, ceiling and panelling. In one room there was a rippingly carved ivory temple, Chinese or Hindu, and lots of miniature statues in ivory and bronze. I and two chaps I was with got out on to the roof and went up the belfry. There were numbers of huge old oaks, under one of which Elizabeth was sitting when she heard of the death of Mary.

"There was a splendid maze in the garden, a really hard one to find out, with numbers of blind turns and stops. There were a great many rabbits, though we only saw one pheasant the whole day, and I should say they don't preserve. I wouldn't live in a big house like that if I were paid for it; it is so dreary and large and not a cosy room in the house—at least I didn't see it. Eton beat us, but they have over four hundred in the corps, all over 5 ft. 4 in., while we only had two hundred and fifty, and a lot of them quite small little chaps. There is not much going on here, so I am afraid there is not much to write about.

"There is even less to say this week than last, so I am afraid our letters will not be over-interesting. Have I told you that I am doing a barn owl now at drawing?

"George, I am thankful to say, did not get 400 lines for the fireworks, but George, if he is not careful and able to pass his tests at the miniature rifle-range, will then earn his 400 lines! You see how they deal with the problem of a nation of marksmen at Herga (Latin for Harrow—M. W.), and at the point of the sword make us crack shots.

"We had a stirring sermon on the Education Bill

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this evening, in which 'Josephus'[1] said that Britain was at a turning-point, and if the right course was not taken, namely, the exclusion of the Education Bill, the nation would go to the dogs—or something to that effect. We had a whole holiday on Saturday because the school had done such good work during the preceding week. By the way, will father be down this term at all—if so, when? Please state the season—or is it reason?—in writing, as Jamie would say—quoting from the classics. My work is going to be the great centre of the drawing show, and Hine told me he had invited a lot of art teachers and critics down, presumably to see my masterpieces!

"We had a very good lecture on Friday evening by Mons. Minssen, of whom I enclose a portrait. It was a very minutely detailed account of Louis' flight to Varennes at the time of the French Revolution. He ended up by saying that he was afraid that those masters who had come to hear a very historical kind of lecture would be disappointed, whilst a good many boys would find it too historical and not sufficiently bloodthirsty, especially small boys of the nature of a small 'IV[3] former,' who had come to him during the morning and asked him if he had a picture of a guillotine in active use!"

His letters this term were written with a view of amusing his mother, who had been ill. There is another good account of a lantern lecture in the following letter:

"I am so glad to hear you are so much better, and very glad that you enjoyed our last week's letters. There is nothing particularly interesting to relate. We had a very good lantern lecture and sermon by a

[1] Dr. Wood.

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Melanesian missionary on last Saturday and Sunday. . . . We have had a series of three art lectures, Arnold Mitchell, the great architect, on British Cathedrals. We had ripping slides, illustrating Roman and Norman twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth century styles. Amongst the cathedrals were Durham, Ely, Bath Abbey, Wells Abbey, Winchester, Exeter and many others. Amongst them there was a photo of King's College Chapel, Cambridge (I think). One story was very interesting. A certain architect came across a very old promising-looking church from the outside, but the inside was like a big whitewashed barn. He thought this was very curious, and removed the whitewash, under several layers of which he discovered not only old oak beams, but exquisite hand paintings of Christ, the Apostles, the Miracles and other subjects in gorgeous reds, blues and golds, covering not only the sides, but the roof as well—very old and valuable. Another interesting thing he told us was that you can never get to the end of the beauties of these old carvings in the cathedrals, as an illustration of which he told us that at one cathedral he saw some beautiful carved foliage, ivy, bramble and vine being the favourite leaves. Wishing to examine it more closely, he borrowed some steps, and in the hollow between the leaves, *i.e.* the black part (illustration) he discovered, minutely carved in the intervening space, the picture of a herdsman picking up the acorns and oak leaves of the larger carving.

"The other day a maid in one of the other houses caught fire, and was very badly burnt; she was only sixteen. Also a boy, a home boarder, died this week, and a chap who was in the school with me, who had left. What do you think of this?

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"'A rush, a whirr, a flighty race,
A shot—one more—down comes a brace.'

"I had to write a poem last night on the meeting of Aeneas cast ashore at Carthage and Venus disguised as a huntress. I wrote:

'(AENEAS) Who art thou, maiden fair,
With eyes of blue and golden hair.
A huntress, I trow,
Who, speedy, chases buck and doe.
Sum pius Aeneas
Cast on this sandy shore, alas!
Sav'd from the ocean chill,
Wreck'd here by vengeful Juno's will
My fame has reached the sky,
And's heard by those who never die,
The Gods! The immortal ones
Have heard the deeds of Trojan sons.

'(VENUS) Know'st thou what land this be,
Not? Then listen and I'll tell thee,
Carthage is its name,
Sprung here in widowed Dido's reign.'

"I had no time to write more, and a good job too."

George's prowess at football was much appreciated by his house. He looked such a small boy among the young men in the groups which were photographed at this date.

His uncle wrote:

"Dec. 18, 1906.

"I was playing in an old boys' match at Harrow on Saturday, and did not see George before the game.

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When I got down to the footer-fields I saw Davidsons and Guillemards were playing the final, but I never expected to see George playing in so great a match, and was hugely surprised and pleased when I found he was playing!

"Afterwards I was in the town standing talking to some friends when several 'big' men came out of a shop, accompanied by a small boy, and came up to talk to us—to my astonishment, the small boy was George, who had been having tea with these old boys; we went off together, and had a nice long talk."

Amongst other amusements during these Christmas holidays was an interesting magic lantern lecture by Mr. Kearton of "bird renown." He saw and admired the beautiful paintings which George had done at school, and gave the boy valuable advice about future work.

There were many visitors, too, and George began to take a prominent place in the shooting parties. Amongst the older men who came was his great-uncle, Mr. Theodore Hare, who was much interested in the way in which he had developed.

As is so often the way, however, sorrow quickly follows a happy time, and before the boys returned in the summer, two of the number who enjoyed those happy days had been called away.

Shortly after Christmas, 1907, the Vicar of Hammerwood, who was greatly loved by one and all, died from the result of an accident, and later on in the spring his great-uncle died from septic pneumonia, after three days' illness.

"Khena," their grandmother's old maid, mentioned in the first chapter, who adored George (the first grandchild), passed away also in the same week as Mr. Woodland, her funeral service being read by Mr. Whidborne,

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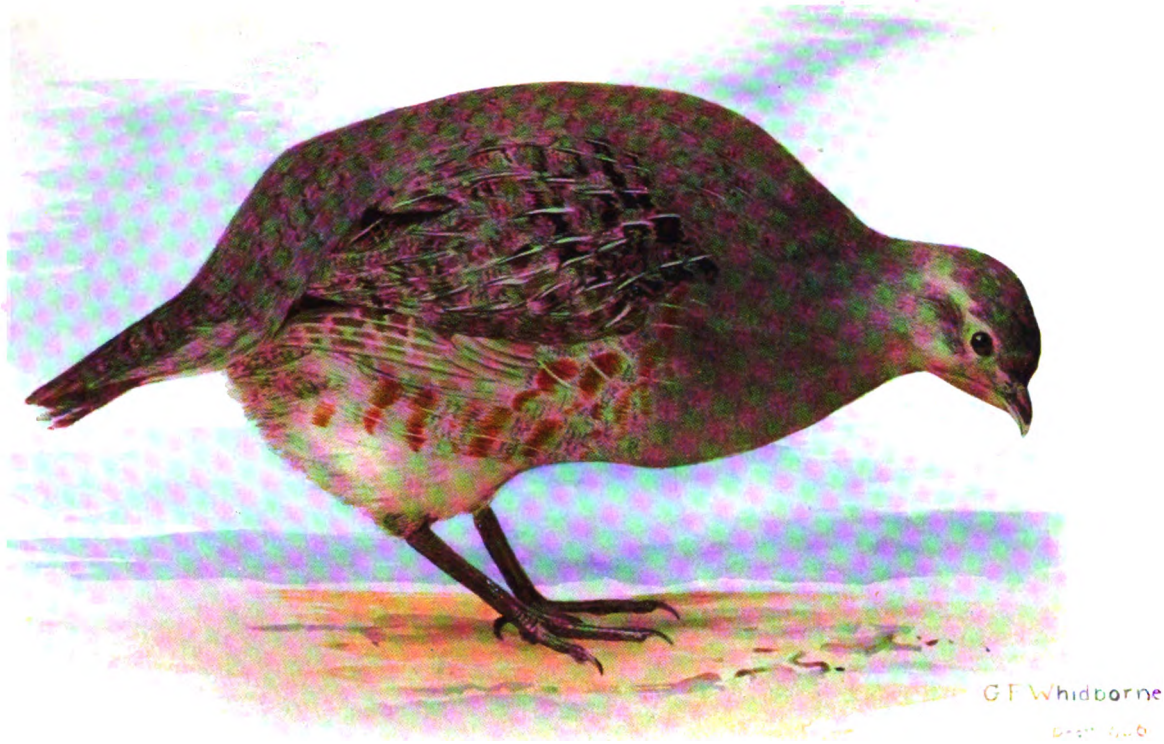

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and a stone being raised to her memory over her grave in Shepton Mallett Cemetery by her "children."

So the year opened sadly, and the child-like sorrow of George at these losses is expressed in the following letters:

Harrow-on-the-Hill,
Feb. 24th, 1907.

MY DEAR MRS. WOODLAND,

You can't think what a blow it was to Charlie and me to hear from father about Mr. Woodland. We both felt that we had lost a true friend, in the very best sense of the word.

I am afraid I am not very good at expressing what I really mean, and perhaps the words won't sound right, but you must know how awfully sorry I am for you all, and how I sympathise with you. But it is a great comfort being certain that he has gone straight to the God he loved and served truly.

I only wish I could be as good a man as he was, when I grow up, and I shall be alright. I did so enjoy going out with Mr. Woodland, he was so unselfish; you couldn't have a pleasanter companion. You can't think how I'll miss him.

I am afraid that perhaps I haven't written a very good letter, but you will believe me, how sorry we are. Arthur must have been a great comfort to you.

The boys sent a beautiful little wreath from Harrow, and George wrote home a good deal about his feelings on these events, which were a shock to him in his happy life.

'I want to write to Mrs. Woodland, but don't know how to express myself."

"I could not say quite what I felt, as I could not express it in words."

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"Mrs. Woodland said nothing could exceed the kindness father showed them all through Mr. Woodland's illness, and the way she said it made me feel very proud of him. . . . I hope grandmama is more consoled about Khena. Did father take Mr. Woodland's funeral as well as hers?"

There is a good deal about his painting this term.

"Could you give me Mr. Kearton's address. Could I ask him for a photo of a bird of some sort? I think I shall. . . . It was very nice seeing him like that last hols."

(Mr. Kearton told his parents that he had never seen feathers better painted than those George had done.)

"Would you mind if I had double drawing lessons this term? I would see that it did not take too much of my lesson-time. It would only be in my leisure hours."

"Mr. Hine said that 'the puffins' would do very well indeed as an illustration for a book (as you said last hols.). He thinks anyone would take them who was offered them. The Kirkpatricks, to whose house I to-day resorted for tea, very kindly said that I might come and try their cats, which would be rather nice, wouldn't it?

"I am going to do one or two little birds, because when people ask you for things it is decent to be able to give them something. . . . I am doing a kingfisher from one of Kearton's photos, and a stuffed bird. It is very hard to do it like that. . . . I did one of the orchids you sent me.

"Miss E. Kirkpatrick is doing hand-printing, carving out the picture on a block and printing the colour off it on to paper. She has to have a different block for each colour and cut differently. It is very slow work,

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but it looks nice. It is the way those Japanese prints are done. Ida Kirkpatrick has been doing some sketches of a red sun setting over a sea and reflected in the water and pools in the wet sand, like you tried at Paris Plage."

In the following letter he refers to his father's favourite subject: "We had a missionary sermon on Uganda in chapel this evening. It was very exciting." However, he descends in the next sentence to a schoolboy's favourite topic—food!

"Please thank Rita and Dora for the toffee; it was awfully nice, I have just eaten some."

"I heard an awfully funny story about something the other day. I meant to tell it to you to-day, but have forgotten what it was. I do wish something exciting would happen, if it is only to fill my Sunday letter. Next week, unless something happens, I shall have to compose my letter in blank verse in order to make it of interest to you.

"If you have read the *Maily Dail*, you are doubtless preparing yourself for a sudden flattening. Signor Mattucci, or whatever his name is, is a very bold man to make such rash promises, and he won't gain any fame even if it comes true." (This referred to a prophecy that the world was coming to an end; to which letter his mother replied that she did not mind if it were!)

He answered: "You are evidently very miserable if you say 'it is all the better if the world is coming to an end.' I hope it won't till the end of the holidays. . . . See you in a month, for two days only, I am afraid, as we come back on the 27th, and the world is reduced to atoms on the 29th (hour uncertain).

"Fancy having had to answer thirty letters! I am

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glad I am not you, father! I should give up in despair after the eighth."

The following letter shows both the serious and mischievous sides of his school life:

"Doctor Wood preached a sermon against the New Theology. The text (which I thought rather a good one, though I forget where it came from) was 'The old is better.' He said the very name (as you said) was wrong, for it was not new but old, dating back 1800 years; also it was not Theology, as divesting Christ of His Incarnation and His right of being Son of God was certainly the opposite of Theology.

"I went for a long walk after chapel to-day, and was ten minutes late for lunch, because we played about on a pond and waited in a manhole in a short tunnel for a train to come through and broke ice. We had to run about a mile with our overcoats on. It was hot!"

He ended the spring term as usual with a chill, and one of his aunts wrote:

"We found George in bed this afternoon when we got to Harrow. . . . I went in to see the invalid . . . he got the chill on the field-day, and has had a bad headache ever since. . . . What a remarkably handsome boy he is growing; I was immensely struck with his good looks."

The following are extracts from letters in the summer term:

"I was in the over-sixteen sports this term, the same as all the fezzes and big chaps, but I won the long jump, also the carrying race, in which you have to carry a small boy 'pigaback.' We are doing the 'Mort D'Arthur' this term for rep. I got full marks for it on Friday, 'and all day long the noise of battle rolled along the mountains by the wintry sea.' It is awfully

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nice; one quite enjoys learning it. . . . Everyone is awfully surprised that I shall be a three-yearer next term. I am myself. I am afraid my chance for a fez grows fainter as the years roll on curiously enough. However well I play, it is no use.

"I have done a greenfinch's wing in the art schools, and have just designed, with the aid of Mr. Hine, a silver and enamel belt clasp. It ought to be rather decent when it is made up.

"The past week has been exceptionally uneventful, and nothing of any interest or importance has occurred to make us forget the leaden skies and soaking grass. Ducker has again been closed till the hot sun shall again warm its waters to a more comfortable temperature.

"With regard to my own personal doings, more success is present; an essay on 'The events that gave Rome greater Strength in Italy till 50 B.C.' gained for me, its composer, the useful number of 100 marks out of, I suppose, 100. C— E— read it out to the form while I writhed in my seat; it is now sent up to Wood, and I hope will be accepted.

"Last night I had to write an essay on 'Spring.' I found blank verse easier than rhyming metre, so I sang of green trees and flowers and sunshine and fragrance and all the other delights of spring for about twenty lines, and then had to stop because I had no more to say. The poem (if such it has any right to be called) will greatly amuse you, as, no doubt, it will tickle my form master. Poems written by Harrow boys are usually unpoetical, and always worse than prose.

"I have three small items of good news for you. First, I came out eighth, my highest place so far; secondly, I had the essay accepted; thirdly, I had the poem on

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Spring accepted. Only one more and I shall get a prize. The drawing is progressing too. I am doing an oxeye or great-tit now, and, though I say it myself, it looks a ripping little beast; it ought to be very cold in its background of snow-clad trees and fields, prepared for its own and my especial benefit by Mr. Hine. I have practically finished the still-life group—a brass pot, some green drapery and a bluish foreground, with two 'William Allan Richardsons' lying in it.

"I hope to have some 'stinks' sent up, and if accepted, I should get a prize, but that is rather like the fish that was nearly *cooked and eaten* by myself when at Westbury. (It had been nearly *caught*, and the small boy had been much chaffed about it.—M. W.) I hear that you are to float on the waters of the Rhine. I am so glad, and I hope you will enjoy it awfully. Don't trouble to come home for Lord's if you want to stay longer. We should get on somehow, but we should miss you.

"I forgot to tell you in your last letter that we had a ripping lecture on the use and meaning of colours in animals by a certain Professor Poulton, who is evidently a very good man on the subject—so good that I looked out his book and liked it, and also being advised to do so by one of the science masters who knows, I obtained an order for the book. I got it because I know *you* will like it as well as I do, and I thought you would not mind.

"We had the best sermon which I have ever heard, at least in Harrow Chapel, preached by Prebendary Villiers this evening. Everyone thought it was awfully good and true; it was against the desecration of the Sabbath in country houses—a regular Father Vaughan's sermon. He said that the boys in the chapel were the only people

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G. F. WHISHAW

JAN. 1907

G. F. WHISHAW

FEB. 1907

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who could stop it when they grew up; he told us all about it, why and wherefore, and how it did harm to have large house parties for the week-end. You know all about it, so I need say no more. Mr. Guillemard asked several of the chaps to go and shoot rooks the other evening. Lucky dogs! You will be glad to hear I have started a sketch of the art school garden. I bought a present for Dora the day before her birthday, but have so far forgotten to send it. It will arrive some time this term with any luck.

"I have got another piece of good news for you, I was second for the Yates-Thompson Art Prize. So I do not this year, at least, get a prize in Speech-Room. Rather bad luck wasn't it? I have got the Harrovian prize for drawing, which I get on the last day of the term at prize-giving, so at last I have got a prize here. I have been stopping out a good bit this week, as I have not been well. I hope you will have a good crossing. I wish I was coming with you. We have had to do an essay on the life of Tennyson and why we liked or disliked poetry. I am afraid I did not do a very good one.

"I am 12th man for the house Eleven. House matches begin on Monday; I shall have to change and sit watching till someone gets hurt, which is not likely. . . . You know you gave us 5/- for our Lord's sticks. I bought an umbrella with mine at the beginning of the term as there was one going cheap. Can I have it back?

"Will you ask them to send the rest of my black socks, as it has been made a three-yearer 'priv' to wear coloured ones, therefore till next term my feet must go into compulsory mourning. You might send the money early this week, as I am very poor. I haven't

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got so much as a French halfpenny. . . . We have got a paper to do on Macaulay's first essay on the Earl of Chatham. It is very difficult stuff to read and to remember. I wish I was at Hammerwood now. We would clear off some of those rabbits. I am glad the young wild ducks are doing well. Has the hawfinch come back yet? An owl is making a row outside my window as I write.

"I am afraid Dora's little present still remains in my drawer. I really must make an effort to send it next week. . . . We had the field-day at Clayton, the Verney's place. It was a very good field-day. While we were marching through a field I saw two tiny little plovers. I am sorry to hear that the pheasants have got a sort of lung disease in some parts. I hope they won't get it at Hammerwood.

"I had a bad time in London on Wednesday when I had that nerve pulled out. It came on to pour, and I had neither coat nor brolly, as the weather had been so lovely in the morning. It rained more and more, and I got your Library book rather spotted. I took a hansom to 7 Curzon Street, and there all my troubles ended. I saw Uncle Theodore for a minute, and I had tea with Aunt Gina, and saw the family screen and a lot of Uncle T.'s sketches, which were ripping. Then we went to see the new garage and works close by. It is a huge place, and is going to have a large flat roof, on which they are going to play tennis, and Aunt Gina suggests giving her parties there.

"Dr. Wood has been made a Prebendary of, I think, St. Paul's—or some place. The Dean of Gloucester preached in chapel this evening about some manuscripts found at some place 150 miles south of Cairo, on which was written some saying of our Lord."

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His father and mother went up the Rhine, and were not able to go to Harrow for Speech-day, as they usually did.

Whilst they were abroad George wrote to them as follows:

"I hope you are having fine weather for your honeymoon, at least I hope it is better than here, a l'Angleterre. Is that right? Is the German for Germany 'Allemagne'? If it is not, as is most probable, and as I don't want to diplay my ignorance or make you a laughing stock among the dwellers of the Rhine, I shall write it in good old English, which I can hardly get wrong. How many people mistook you for a newly-married couple? Did they leave you well alone on the steamer and in the train? I think I am going in for the Shakespeare exam. next term; which means I should have to work in the hols., so it is doubtful whether my illustrious name will honour the list of competitors for that exam.

"Only four days to Speecher. Oh! you have missed something by being away this year for the speeches. They are usually awfully slow, but I have never seen anything so funny as the Greek, English and French plays this term. The Greek play is about a man who disguised his two daughters as pigs for various reasons, and two monitors in full evening dress get down on all fours, with pigs' masks on their heads and grunt like pigs. The father of the girls, in other words the pig-driver, has also full evening dress, a corps slouch hat on, and an old umbrella.

"In the French play a man is hiding in a sack, and another man pretends he is going to help him. When the first chap is right inside the sack, so that he can't see out, the other one (who is in our house) pretends

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that the first man's enemies have come in—to punish him. This he does by keeping up a conversation the whole time between the two people, by tip-toeing quietly round the sack for every answer to his own questions. He then pretends that the enemy is hitting the sack when he is really doing it himself.

"The English play is from Sheridan's 'Critic,' and is very good indeed. One monitor, to show he is a girl, wears a bathing-towel pinned round his shoulders like a shawl. Two others are in full evening dress, except for sun-bonnets, which proclaim them members of the weaker sex. I nearly made myself ill by laughing for one and a half hours on end whilst watching the rehearsal.

"I wish I had got the Yates-Thompson. I am afraid I shall never get the speech-room prize.

"Have you learnt much German yet? Has the Emperor sent you a telegram yet?

"Don't trouble to answer our letters until you get back, as I know by my vast experience how troublesome it is to write letters of any sort abroad or during a holiday.

"The field-day was rather interesting, in that the field of battle was Epping Forest. We got out at, I think, Chitting Station. We had a very good day indeed. When we were near the end we came upon a school treat (it was a treat for the school, I can tell you) from St. Mary's, Walthamstow. Is that Uncle E.'s parish? I kept a look-out for him, but did not see him. . . . I want to see the mongoose very much."

His aunt had sent this little creature to her brother, with the following letter:

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"My poor dear Ferris,

I have just gone and got you a mongoose. If you would rather not have him, please wire to the Stores, otherwise he will arrive to-morrow by the 12 train at E. Grinstead. I am told he is quite gentle, and the man took him out and played with him like a kitten. He looks a nice little beast, but I think you will have to put him on a chain at first. His proper food is bread, milk and a little meat. You did say you wanted one to kill the rats, didn't you?"

Riky-tiky became a source of great interest to visitors. He did not kill the rats, but he upset flower pots, salt-cellars and—servants! He had a happy life, going for walks on Seymour's shoulder, playing on the lawn with the children, and teasing the young footmen by upsetting the dinner-table just after it had been laid, and then hiding away in every imaginable corner when they tried to catch him. He died finally when the family were away from home, and there were grave suspicions that he had been neglected out of revenge!

George ended up the term with a prize for composition, his master saying to his father that he had more command of the English language than any other boy he had come across. His report was the best he ever had, one of the remarks being "Good progress; he is working capitally. English poetry has attractions for him."

A long drive seems nothing unusual to those children who only remember the days of motor-cars, but even ten years ago they were not common property, and expeditions to places more than a few miles away from home were great events. There was the early start in the morning, and possibly some of the journey would

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be taken by train; a carriage would be engaged, or perhaps two waggonettes, to be in readiness at some station to take the party to an old castle or some other place of interest.

The Whidbornes were very fond of these long expeditions, and whilst at the Priory had explored most of the interesting spots in the counties round them.

At Hammerwood the immediate attractions were so much appreciated that excursions were less frequent, but there was a notable one in the summer holidays of 1906, when they went to Sheffield Place, now known as Sheffield Park, in the county of Sussex, the home of the children's ancestor, Lord Sheffield.[1]

Mrs. Whidborne's great-grandmother, Maria Josepha Holroyd, afterwards Lady Stanley of Alderley, had been brought up there with her sister. Her father had married three times, and when his daughters were grown up and married, a little brother had been born, whose grandson was the Lord Sheffield of 1906—a very eccentric man. He had quarrelled with all his relations, and could not bear strangers. A friend of his, however, after much correspondence, was able to obtain permission for the Whidbornes to go over the grounds with him, on condition that they did not go near the house!

The following letter gives an account of the expedition:

From Mrs. Whidborne to her Mother.

We had a nice day for Sheffield Park. We all drove to East Grinstead in high spirits, and then went by a little motor rail to the station for the Park. The three boys went with us, the Atkinsons and E. Hare, so we

[1] Colonel Holroyd, the first Lord Sheffield, was in command of the Militia which subdued the mob during the Gordon Riots.

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were quite a large party. We had ordered a brake to be there, and it was a very nice one. When we arrived at the Park gates they were unlocked for us. We got out in front of the house, but there were some men stationed there, who told us which way to go, and said that we must on no account go near the lawn on the other side of the house! We walked down through beautiful gardens by a succession of large ponds with waterfalls, and Charlie and some of the others took photographs. It was very well kept up.

We saw some splendid Persian cats in big aviaries, or cages, I suppose one should call them. At the end of the gardens we came to the cricket field, which is, I believe, a famous one, as Lord Sheffield is rather mad on that game. When we arrived there we saw Miss A——. She was very pleasant, and apologised for Lord S.'s absence, as he was too unwell to leave the house. Evelyn and I talked to her for some time, and she showed us a number of interesting things which were in the large Pavilion on the field. A cricket match was going on, and she was quite sad that we could not stay to see it. Lord S. had thought that he had mentioned it in his letter, but had not done so, and we had made other plans for the rest of the day. We left our cards with her, and explained our exact relationship to the Sheffields.

Mr. C—— had arranged for us to lunch at the Sheffield Arms, in the village of Fletching, where his cousin is Rector, and after lunch he met us and took us into the church. It was very interesting. Gibbon is buried in the Sheffield Mausoleum. We drove from there, *via* Maresfield—a very pretty drive—to Uckfield, where we had tea, then to Buxted, and home by train. We were all very tired.

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Mr. G. F. Chambers (not related to the family), who had arranged this day of pleasure, was well known in Sussex as an antiquarian and astronomer. He and Lord Sheffield had a great many interests in common. Both are now dead. Lord Sheffield died in 1909, and everything had to be sold, the title going to his cousin Lord Stanley of Alderley. His pictures and furniture were largely bought in by the family, and some of his possessions are in Hammerwood House.

Seymour Whidborne was now to join his brothers at Harrow.

It is sometimes considered advisable to send brothers to different schools, but these boys were all great friends. Of course, there were occasional quarrels, but who that has belonged to a large family would give up the remembrance of some of the disagreements of their childhood?

George wrote after their return in the autumn:

"It seems months since I caught that last glimpse of your tear-stained faces on the dreary platform, and yet it is only a few days, in which many things, both expected and unexpected, have happened!

"First, your two eldest children have got their removes! . . . I have every prospect of a lively term, as I am now under ——, two punishments of fifty lines each have already wandered my way from my reverend master, and this is only the first Sunday.

"It is very nice being a three-yearer. . . . My money is rapidly disappearing; I really think I have more reason to spend more money than Charlie or Seymour, now that I am older and senior to them. . . . I am going to paint The Grove from the top of Speech-room, and if it is decent, present it to Mr. G. as a parting present. I am sorry to say he is leaving this term.

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"Diabolo is the rage at present; people play it all day long, even in the streets and openly in the house-yards. It is, I suppose a disgrace to Harrow, and characteristic of most of us. One of the boy's father said, 'I knew French children loved the game and played it openly, but I did not know Harrow boys were such—(let me see, is "babes" too strong?).' I think it is all very well on the lawn in the country, but in a town it acts up to its name.

"I shall attain my seventeenth birthday on Tuesday. Seymour is thriving; he sang his solo at house-singing quite successfully last night."

George's literary tastes come out very much in these autumn letters. Three essays "sent up to the head-master" meant a prize, and George obtained several of these. The one on "Autumn" has survived, and is such a pretty little bit of word-painting that it has been inserted with the poems at the end of the book. He and his father exchanged ideas about one on "The characteristics of a good novel," and George writes: "I took 'The Scarlet Pimpernel' because it was the only book I could think of that depended mainly on the plot. Of course, Sir Walter Scott's novels are infinitely more high-class and more standard works, but, as you say, they are good in all three respects, and not mainly in one. Thanks awfully for your letter. It is very good, and if I could copy it out as an essay I am sure it would be easily sent up!"

The following letter is autumnal in tone:

"There is a field-day to-day, I believe, about two hours' journey away, so altogether the journey will take four hours, although the actual fight or field-day will be less than three hours. 'C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre.' Is this quotation right? I am no

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French scholar! The weather is typical of autumn in her most unpoetical garb. The leaves are coloured, or rather discoloured, by the universal mud, as they lie in damp and dirty piles along the road.

"The football fields are slippery as ice, the ball more slippery—to kick the ball is impossible, even to stand upright is nearly so—and only about a third of the term is gone.

"We had rather a good lecture the other day from a missionary who had worked amongst the pearl-divers of Australia. Talking of pearls reminds one naturally of oysters. The other day I entered the fishmonger's, just for a little conversation with the 'monger, and in the shop espied a bucket with oysters therein. I said, 'Shall I venture?' Everyone, of course, said, 'Yes, go on.' I thought 'better not,' especially when Mr. Mann opened a shell-fish disclosing a slimy shapeless mass, with a beard of nearly a week's growth! However, having gone so far, I piled on pepper and vinegar, held my nose, shut my eyes and opened my mouth ——! I rather think I must have swallowed a pearl, or perhaps the shell!

"They had a new game at house-singing called 'follow-my-leader.' Dr. Buck played through a tune, one verse, and if anyone recognised it they sang it. Then he would play another, and so on.

"Seymour came out quite high up in his form last week, I think.

"The other day, whilst I was painting The Grove from the top of Speech-room, it was very windy. My easel blew over, my paint-box, water and brushes followed on to the ground."

His low place in the school began to trouble his father, but his last report from the house-master had

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redeeming points in it: "Conduct very satisfactory, he has kept quiet and modest," was one, and there was an improvement in the lessons, though the remark is added, "His place is due to his wits rather than his work." He spent too much time on his beloved painting and literature, and evidently thought he could get along by "his wits."

His house-master wrote to his father:

"I am sorry that the time has come to bid you farewell. George's literary tastes are worth cultivating; he has had several exercises 'sent up for good' this term, but don't let him neglect the dull routine of form-work. He is now becoming one of the prominent boys in the house, and I am sure his influence will be for good. Charlie has been working very well this term, and is developing. Seymour has made a most excellent start, and I hope you were as pleased as I was at his head-remove. There are very few boys leaving, so that a double remove was not possible. With best wishes for the future of the trio."

He also wrote to George, who had presented the farewell picture of the house, which had been such a pleasure to him to do.

"I must thank you once more for your delightful present, but I cannot bear, when reading your Form Report, to think of your spending so much of your time to give us pleasure. However, you may know that at any rate you have produced a picture which we value most highly, and which will hang in a place of honour in our new home to remind us of you as well as of The Grove.

"And now do remember how much depends on next term."

George was never a "saint," and he was sometimes

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even a source of anxiety to those who loved him. The age between sixteen and twenty is a critical one. The childish fear of punishment is gone, and those parents are to be pitied who have not made real friends with their boys in their childhood. How well his mother understood all this is evidenced by the reply which she gave to a young mother, with three sons, who came to her soon after George's death and asked how she had brought him up, as she wanted her children to be like him. All his mother could tell her was that he had been trained in high principles, that every mother who is a real friend to her grown-up sons *must* go through fears and anxieties, except in very rare cases, but trust in God and careful training *will* bring them out on the right side.

With George games took up too much of his time and strength, his poetical and artistic side was cultivated by him, but the ordinary lessons were not properly prepared. He was brilliant in some ways, and it was disappointing to his friends that he did not seem to realise that there would be examinations to pass in the future.

His friend Mr. Bull, who followed his boys' careers with great interest, was an old Harrovian himself, and took an especial interest in George because of his plucky stand during his first term. He wrote: "There is no doubt at all that if you liked you could have been at the very least in the Vth by this time, if not in the VIth. I do earnestly trust that you have already taken a turn for the better, and that you will put your whole strength into your work and gain many places by the end of the term. . . . Do prove to us that the days of slacking are over for you. . . . I long to see you showing your true self and giving Harrow of your best because it is right."

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Unfortunately the recently-appointed house-master, like many who become rulers, was something of a new broom, and did not understand the boys with whom he had to deal. At this time the tone in the house was as good as could be found in any school, and the "three-yearers" were all nice boys. George, though low in the school, had a great deal of influence through his athletic prowess, and among his chief friends in the house was one of the head boys in the school.

In the January of 1908 he won the desire of his heart: "We played that house match yesterday that I told you we were going to play, and we were badly beaten; however, you will be glad to hear that I got my fez at last. . . . I must order my fezzes to-morrow; they will add to Smith's bill, but I am sure you won't mind that! I hope my report is good. I had to do an essay on the sailing of an emigrant ship. As I have never seen such a ship, and very seldom vessels of any description, it was harder than it might have been. I talked wildly of ducks, moorings, gangways and other nautical things. . . . I am captain of one of the sides in the footer this term. They have started Rugger in the VIth form game. I should think it would take."

He won the long jump, and was second for the hundred yards' race in the sports.

"You will be glad to hear that I had the essay on the 'Emigrant ship' sent up, also that in two essays written for the house-master in pupil-room I was top in each."

"I had three essays sent up last week. I have got some time to write one on 'Political Assassination.' I don't know anything about it."

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In the meantime his painting was making great progress. He wrote: "The weasel was A.1. The stoat came too soon after it. I should like a thrush or a starling sent." He ends this letter with: "The weather is beastly, and I feel jolly bad. It takes it out of you, and makes working difficult. I think I have every complaint under the sun. . . . I started this on Monday, but have been stopping out."

He arrived home very unwell, and was not able to return to school until several weeks after the summer term had begun.

Early in May he went to stay with his grandparents near Southampton; whilst there he heard that a farmer near by had shot a vixen fox and her cubs, but that one was still alive in the hole. He watched by that hole for hours until at last his perseverance was rewarded by catching the little creature. It was taken to Hammerwood in a hamper, and for some time was a rival to Riky-tiky in the affections of the family. It was far more attractive than a kitten, and was so tame that it went out on the baby's perambulator, but, sad to say, its legs began to go wrong from improper feeding, and the local Master of Hounds seeing it one day, declared that it was an unsafe pet, and it had to go, but not before George had made a most beautiful painting of its head.

It was during this holiday that George wrote the poem on "Samoa," the subject set for the prize poem, in which his father took such an extreme interest. He did not at all like returning to school for many reasons, and his first letter was rather depressed:

"I did not enjoy that first evening one little bit. I was leaning out of my window, thinking of a particularly hard piece of construe I had to do, and which I

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thought impossible, when I heard a well-known voice, and a brown owl flew by, only about fifteen yards away. It was quite light, only six o'clock. It nearly did for me, and when I lay sleepless on my hard and unaccustomed couch, thinking not very happily on the term before me, I heard a nightingale singing in The Grove, I thought it was piling on the agony rather too much. . . .

"I was within two places of getting a budge, which makes it all the more sickening. I think M—— might have tried to get me a budge a little harder; he would not have failed. It would have been quite easy for him. I am alone in the form, too, which makes it particularly hard, as I have no one to share the work with, and it takes twice as long. . . .

"I finished 'Samoa,' and showed it up, nearly too late. I expect when people get to hear of it (no one knows now except two people) I shall be awfully ragged about it. . . . I have got a vase of narcissi in my room up against a scarlet geranium (in a pot). They look lovely.

"There is only about a month to the judging of the Yates-Thompson, and I have hardly had time to do any drawing. It will be rather rotten if I lose it through not having time to do anything much. I have started a stuffed moorhen indoors, and a view of the terrace from Speecher out of doors. Mr. H. liked the waxbill I did on the rice-paper very much."

"My last letter was not meant to be doleful in the least, but to-day has made me feel rather bad. I took care to ask O—— what my report would be like, and finding it would be rather good, I rushed to M—— and asked him what sort of report I had! It turned out to be the best report I have had since he came in to

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the house, but instead of any praise or congratulations, all I got was a jaw about the rowdiness of the house. It may be so, only no one with any fairness could accuse me of being one of the noise-makers. . . . Well, I got a good report and full marks for two construes, and a map of Spain has been 'sent up.' . . . I feel in an awful funk because the Samoan result will probably be read out to-morrow in Speecher."

In this letter he makes reference to a plan which some of the older boys had for raising the tone of the house. The house-master had upset their tempers partly through not understanding the conservative nature of young people. For instance, he had had a certain door, which had always been painted red, the house colour, painted a different tint; he had introduced the system of "espionage" instead of trust, and in other ways altered former customs. The "three-yearers" had started a magazine, which was called the *Grove Conservative Association Magazine*, and the first number lived up to its name! Its business was to report political debates, to encourage the reading of parliamentary reports, and generally to rouse a sense of patriotism. The authorities at the house merely looked on it as an occasion for the unruly spirits to meet together, which was a mistake, to say the least of it, as the paper really exhibited signs of distinct talent, and George's letters show how seriously the promoters took themselves.

He strongly objected to the suffragette movement, but as his parents were ardently in favour of the *suffragists*, he wrote a frantic post-card to his mother one day:

"You might as soon as you can write and tell me all your chief points in favour of woman's suffrage and

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answers to points against, as I am speaking on their behalf next Sunday, as no one else will and *for your sake!*"

Some of the friendships he made at Harrow lasted for years, as the boys went on to Cambridge together. Chief among these was that with Derrick Gunston. George and he had gone to Harrow on the same day, and with the exception of six months when George was in South Africa, and a year when Derrick was in Canada, they were never long apart. Derrick wrote of him after his death:

"He was a wonderful and charming character, quite the most loveable boy it was possible to meet."

References to "Derek," as he would call him, are frequent in George's letters henceforward.

His other chief friend at Harrow, Hiram Craven, had been with him at St. Andrew's, and he also felt the death of his old comrade very much, writing: "Our friendship at Cambridge and at Harrow and Frant will always remain one of the happiest things in my life. I keep thinking again and again of all we did together. . . ."

But to return to the summer of 1908 and to continue George's letters:

"Thank you for the notes, which were ripping, and just what I wanted. Unfortunately the father of the President, a great friend of mine, is dying, and he was called home on Saturday. It is very sad, and, of course, we could not have the debate. . . .

"Ducker is now open. . . . I made 28 yesterday at cricket in one 'over.' I got two over the fence for 3 each, three into the pavilion for 4, and one on the roof, where it broke a tile and stuck, for 6. Rather good for me! I wrote a little thing on the Swimming

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Test at Ducker, called 'The Victim,' which may or may not appear in the Harrovian."

"I have two pieces of news which I think will interest you. First, 'Samoa' was given out. I was second. The person who was first won the Prize Poem last year, and is a monitor and will be head of the school next year. The person after me is in the '12.' The next, fourth, is another monitor, so I was in fairly good company. The house-master was awfully bucked, and said as it was such bad luck having nothing to mark it, he would give me a prize on his own, so he very kindly gave me a volume of Browning. The chap who was third was given three quid by his people! I hope you will be bucked, as I never even expected to be read out in Speecher. . . . I had my essay on 'Birds' nesting' sent up, with eighty, that is ten marks more than anyone else in the form. . . . Another thing is, though 'the Women's Suffrage' was put off, we had it to-day, and I spoke for ten minutes. I was awfully nervous at first, but I got on all right after a bit. I spoke impromptu, thanks to your help. Unfortunately we lost—only 11 to 17 though, which was jolly good, as we had not expected to get any votes at all, as most of the people have a rooted dislike of suffragettes (one class)."

"I am afraid the Pan-Anglican offering was not at all a success. I suppose a million is rather a large order though. To cap your P-A story of the 'earwigging' of the offerings, I must tell you one I heard the other day. An old lady (as usual), who had a dangerous amount of classical knowledge, wanted to know why they must go and drag in the name of a horrid heathen god into this Christian gathering.

"On Saturday the Bishop of Auckland spoke in Speecher on the S.P.C.K., and on Sunday we had a

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sermon from the Bishop of Melanesia (near Samoa). This over-dose of bishops is caused by the Pan-Anglican!

"I am quite well now, and take my medicine 'regularly at intervals.'

"I am awfully sorry I did not tell you about Speech Day. I really never trouble to tell you that sort of thing. I leave it to Charlie!

"It is ripping Parker's seeing the young woodcock and its mother. I should like to see all the little wild-ducks on the pond. There must be a crowd of them. I suppose they have not 'layed' any eggs yet—the fancy ducks, I mean. Which reminds me of a joke in this week's 'Punch.' 'Emma! egg spoons immediately; when you lay eggs, you really must lay spoons too!' . . . I have not seen the prize poem yet, but they say it is jolly good, though a little uninteresting."

A telegram soon after arrived: "Have landed the Yates-Thompson." This caused great rejoicing, for everyone felt that he deserved it.

His next letter shows the regret that he always felt that he had rather "slacked" over the end of the poem on "Samoa," for as usual he never dreamed that there was any chance of his being first.

"If I had only kept up to the standard of the holiday part, I think I should have won. I get £3 worth of books for the Yates-Thompson; I would have got £5 worth for the poem. . . . The sun is looking lovely on the still yellow-green of the oak just outside my window against the deep blue of the sky, and just between two branches is a little grey-blue distance of London, with hayfields in between and a slight haze of summer hanging over it. I must find pleasure in something, and just at present I am feeling very bored.

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I am looking forward awfully to seeing you at Speecher."

His report for art, dated July of this year, is:

"He thoroughly deserved the Yates-Thompson prize. His ability for painting birds is quite remarkable, and he has a fine perception of colour."

His father's criticisms were much valued by him, and the following letter shows such knowledge of the work he had done that it seems well to give it almost in its entirety:

"I have been using the new typewriter in making two copies of your Samoa. . . . The one which is best typed I am sending you, with various suggestions and emendations, which you may well consider. Now that I have compared yours with the prize poem, I think it is quite clear that no judges could have given yours the prize, because as a 'composition' yours has several technical faults, while there are none that I have observed in the other. On the other hand, as poetry, I think I may say without prejudice that yours is of a definitely higher standard. Of course, in a composition the presence of technical faults is a great drawback.

"I think it is probable that if you had had time to revise it, you would have found most of them out for yourself, and would have corrected them. In the first place, you have two lines of only four feet. Then you have several times used the same word near together. The punctuation is in some cases bad, and in one or two cases has spoilt the sense.

"Several of the lines are weak, and might be improved by re-casting; unfortunately the second line is one of the weakest. (There are quite as weak lines in the prize poem—more I should say—but then there are no 'four-footers.')

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"The word 'dirtier' is *infra dig.*

"'Disease' and 'infirmities' hardly rhyme; though possibly you could not have avoided them.

"On the other hand, leaving comparisons with the other poem, I see a great deal of real poetry in yours; several of the thoughts I am interested in recognising, as coming from your own observation and being good—very probably many people would not understand them for want of knowledge—for instance, how moss grows round tree-trunks, or being acquainted with the colour of swallows. There are lots of things that I thoroughly enjoyed in it, and a good deal of good diction.

"There is perhaps one caution that I should give you. Your paint-box is a most useful adjunct to poetry, and you have mixed your colours well, but don't overcrowd colours, or rather don't hang your pictures *too* close, as it tends to weaken their effect. I don't say you have done so here—in fact, I like it all, and only mention it for the future.

"I am as much delighted as if you had got the prize, because I believe that your writing would be quite up to prize-standard if you took care to carefully revise it. I think I see traces of Milton and of Cowper in some of your lines!"

George shows in the following letter how he could write when there was nothing in his school-life with which to make an interesting epistle:

"I have absolutely nothing to tell you, as you were only down here on Wednesday; nothing has happened in the interim to mar the peaceful monotony of life, except perhaps the visit of Aunt Connie, which marred it very pleasantly indeed, with the help of clear soup, salmon, chicken and ices at the King's Head.

"I will bring a 'Harrovian' or two back with me at

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Lord's as you may want a copy or two. (Probably this contained one of his poems.) If I have time I have got to write something for the next number and also for the 'Grove Conservative Ass. Annual or Terminal Report,' whenever that 'excellent little contemporary of ours' appears. The worst of getting prizes is, that everybody wants you to do things for them, and you don't like to refuse. People ask me to do drawings, for instance, as if they were the only people in the world and my oldest and dearest friends. . . . This nonsensical French sentence is an English one too if you read it quickly: 'Pas d'elle yeux Rhone que nous'; so is this 'Avec que petit.' For answers, 'Paddle your own canoe' and '(H)ave a cup o' tea.' This is a joke told by the late house-master, so he must bear the blame if you consider it——! I had tea with the Pecheys to-day, and enjoyed it awfully. Mr. P. is going to write an Oratorio some day, with a musical friend of his, on 'The Temple at Jerusalem.' The Webb-Peploes have been staying with them. . . ."

He frequently tells little stories in his letters, but as probably most of them are well known, the foregoing are enough as examples.

During the summer holidays the great event took place of his first visit to Switzerland. George inherited a great love for this beautiful country, with which his family were associated in many ways. His ancestress, Maria Josepha Holroyd, had loved to stay at Lausanne with her friend Gibbon, the historian, and although she did not care much apparently for his entourage, she writes of breakfasting with him "in the new room on the terrace, which commands a delightful view of the lake and mountains." The present Hotel Gibbon is built on the site of this house, although it is to be

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feared that the view is much spoilt, and all that is left of the time of Gibbon is one or two small plane trees. Miss Holroyd went to Chamonix, the Col de Balme, Thun, Berne and many other places, and wrote diverting accounts of her travels, which were accomplished in a very different way from the boys' journeys. Then, again, Mrs. Hare-Naylor died at Lausanne. She had become blind as the result of eye strain in painting some wonderful pictures of Hurstmonceux Castle, which are still in the possession of the Hare family; and possibly there were famous oculists there in those days as now whom she was visiting. She died within a week of her favourite cousin, the beautiful Duchess of Devonshire, whom she was supposed to resemble.

Mrs. Whidborne's mother, at the age of fifteen, had been the first lady to make the ascent of Mt. Blanc from the St. Gervais side, with her brother Theodore Hare, in August, 1856.[1] Her mother, Mrs. Marcus Hare, was living in Switzerland for her children's education, and Lady Chambers, the other grandmother, in her long time of loneliness had also taught her children not only to love but to *know* the country.

Mr. Whidborne's father had initiated him into the ways of travellers, too, before there were so many globe-trotters as there have been of late years, and this knowledge of Switzerland made him choose the "Lac Leman" for the first introduction of his sons to a range of snow-clad mountains. Unfortunately George was so anxious not to miss the first view of these, that he got out of his sleeping berth at an unearthly hour, and one of those French smuts which are always wandering about to catch the unwary entered his eye, and he was miserable until a visit to a doctor at Lausanne put things straight.

[1] See note, p. 100 *et seq.*

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The Castle of Chillon inspired the verses which are at the end of the book. The visit took place on a particularly lovely day, and the approach to it was made in the way in which everyone should see it for the first time, by boat from Vevey.

Those who go over the Castle in these days, with troops of sightseers of all nationalities, long for the good old Byronic days, when the shores of the lake at the Montreux end were not covered with villas, which now dwarf the massive pile and much diminish the mental power of constructing the historical past.

The water beneath the Castle is said to be 1000 ft. deep. Bonnivard, the celebrated prisoner of the Duke of Savoy, for six years was chained to a rock, from which he could only move three feet either way; and the stone is shown on which 2000 Jews—men, women and children—were put to death; there are also many "oubliettes"—such an expressive name—and instruments of torture.

It is no wonder then that the schoolboy was inspired to write some of his first verses on such a subject.

The low lands, however, did not long content two boys of sixteen and seventeen, and the party had to move up to Finhaut, and then on to Argentières and Chamonix. Their father had done some climbing, and had made the ascent of Mont Rosa some years before: he was a cautious man, and knew that his sons had adventurous spirits. The boys had the youthful feeling that they could "do" anything, even Mont Blanc straight away, and the hotels were filled with that bane of parents—the man who did wonders "without a guide!"

The weather was very bad, however, and only a few glacier expeditions could be attempted. There was

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one of four hours up the Mer de Glace, which was quite sufficiently dangerous for their mother, who accompanied the boys and their father! Charlie took a good many photographs, and one of them was made into a slide and used by their father's friend, Professor Hull, at one of his lectures during the following autumn in order to show the recent shrinkage of the Glacier de Bossons and the Mer de Glace.

Whilst the party were at Chamonix a French lady was killed by falling into a crevasse whilst traversing the path straight across the "Mer." She was doing it in ordinary high-heeled boots!

The Whidbornes returned home by Paris, but it was hot and crowded, and George was feeling very much aggrieved at some school news that he had heard, namely, that one of his chief friends was not to be Head of The Grove next term, as everyone had hoped and expected.

Charlie wrote on their return to school:

"We had a very good debate on the Eucharistic Conference, and the motion was 'That Mr. Asquith was not justified in stopping the carrying of the host in the Procession.' . . . George spoke very well against the motion, which was lost by 8 votes to 13."

George wrote about this debate:

"You must send me as many points . . . as you can. Craven will probably make a very good speech for the motion, and I must too, because I think it is important that people should get some sort of idea of what the R.C.'s are doing."

His letters at the beginning of the term are interesting as showing his position.

"It does seem years since that day last week when I came in from walking up partridges and went to bed

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with a cold in my head and a hot treacle posset in my inside!

"I am in the upper school; also, besides Captain of Footer, I am 'Soldier of Hall,' that is, I am supposed to keep the little boys in order at breakfast, tea and supper, and to see that they don't make a noise or a mess, and that they don't swear or misbehave themselves in any other way. I am also Vice-President of the Conservative Association; it sounds good, but I don't have much to do except sit on the Committee. I know now why people always laugh at Committees.

"I believe M. had forgotten about the Shakespeare, but I reminded him of it, and said I would go in for it if it would give him any pleasure. It is on Nov. 3rd. There is no chance of getting it, but it will probably do me good. I like my form master very much, but unfortunately we do an awful lot of classics and no English with him. . . ."

"I can't make up my mind whether it would be better to leave or stay at the end of this term."

"I had an essay to do on Bulgaria. It is very interesting studying politics in the Balkan Peninsula. Don't you think so?

"I don't think Servia will be an independent nation in 15 years' time, even if she gets out of a war with Austria now."

"Founder's Day was on Thursday. Six elevens of Old Boys came down to play footer. I was playing for the school Second Eleven. I am afraid I shall never play for any higher eleven. About 200 or 300 old Harrovians were down; one played football who had left the school nearly 25 years ago.

"We had pork at lunch to-day. Like a fool, I took it by mistake for veal.

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"This afternoon we had a really hard match against another house. The pork did not agree with me in the least. If I had been a Jew I should have thought that my conscience was reproving me for eating an unclean delicacy.

"Down at footer in the afternoon sometimes when I see a misty grey afternoon sky I think how nice some wild-duck would look flying across it, and I think of you and Hammerwood.

"My form master, who is a rather well-known politician, told me the other day that there will probably be riots this winter if we have a long spell of cold weather; there might almost be an insurrection.

"Seymour has been playing footer awfully well lately.

"I don't know whether it would not be better for me to leave at the end of this term. I think I should be sure of passing the 'Little Go' if I did my Paley with father.

"I am glad you got those pictures and things at Augustus Hare's sale. I thought he died some time ago. I found out the other day that he was at Harrow and in the Grove. He is mentioned in the records as a 'distinguished member of the house'!

"I could do with a little money if you could do without some."

He constantly mentions friends, enquiring after little details concerning them and asking that small kindnesses may be done to them.

The house was in a very unsatisfactory state at this time, and though it is best to say little about unpleasant things when past, yet it is necessary to say a few words about the end of this term. The house-master had given out publicly, when he took on the house, that he

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should get rid of all boys who had been three years in the house as soon as possible; he had exhibited little tact in his conduct with the older boys, and affairs now came to a climax.

The wrong boy had been put in authority, and he was *allowed to bear* all the responsibility of keeping order. He was not fitted to deal with the younger "mauvais esprits," and the boys, whose feelings had been hurt, were not going to help more than was necessary. The result was disorder, and the wrong persons got the blame.

A little tact and patience would have put things right, but it was not forthcoming. The master had his wish. Not only George and his friends left, but in all ten or eleven of the best boys.

The end of their school career was spoilt for them, and it is questionable whether the bitterness engendered by the way in which they were treated was ever eradicated in them. Certainly it is a question whether the house was not the worse for their departure.

An instance is given in the following letter of how difficult it is to understand boys' methods:

"What annoys me is that the house-master takes credit for stopping smoking in the Grove. The *real* reason is this, that the house-bloods don't smoke. E. is in the cricket eleven, and does not smoke. C. is going to be a parson, and does not want to get into the habit. G. does not smoke because there is no one to smoke with. I, as you know, and you may trust me, have *not* smoked *once* since Christmas, and before that only occasionally. We don't smoke, and the small boys are not allowed to, by the rule made by the head of the house last Easter term, that it should be a '3 yearer' 'priv' to smoke. That is the true history. I think

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that the best plan is now to have a peaceable month to end up with."

He was very forgiving, and never said a word afterwards about the way in which he had been treated.[1] Little did Harrow think then that the name of "Whidborne Major" would figure four times in the *Harrovian War Supplement* a few years after.

Written by one of George's Masters at Harrow.

THREE HILLS.[2]

There is a hill in England,
  Green fields and a school I know,
Where the balls fly fast in summer,
  And the whispering elm trees grow.
    A little hill, a dear hill,
  And the playing fields below.

There is a hill in Flanders,
  Heaped with a thousand slain,
Where the shells fly night and noontide
  And the ghosts that died in vain.
    A little hill, a hard hill
  To the souls that died in pain.

There is a hill in Jewry,
  Three crosses pierce the sky,
On the midmost He is dying
  To save all those who die.
    A little hill, a kind hill
  To souls in jeopardy.

EVERARD OWEN.

HARROW-ON-THE-HILL.

[1] He signified his intention of giving two German helmets that he had brought home to the School museum, and this wish has been duly carried out.

[2] *Three Hills and other Poems*, by Rev. Everard Owen. Printed by permission of the publishers, Messrs. Sidgwick & Jackson.

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Note.—When George was at Chamonix, large parties of people made the ascent daily—men, women, and even some children, to the great envy of the Whidborne boys—but in 1853 it had only been accomplished by two women and a few men, partly owing to the prohibitive prices of the guides (about £30 per head) and partly owing to the physical strain it involved, before the safe route was found out. Whether any woman had climbed Mont Blanc from Chamonix between 1853 and 1856 besides Marie of Mont Blanc, a peasant woman, and a "lady" of Geneva named Henriette of d'Angeville, both mentioned by a traveller of that date, is not known to the editor of this memoir, but it is certain that no other women had made the ascent from the St. Gervais side before Lucebella Hare went up, and it was considered a great feat, involving as it did 11½ hours' hard climbing.

C. E. Mathews, a well-known member of the Alpine Club, who published a book on the ascents of Mont Blanc, was much interested when he heard of the Hares' expedition in 1899, not having known of it previously. He went over to St. Gervais to enquire into the details of their climb, and wrote to Mrs. Strong in October, 1899, saying: "The only one of the old guides at St. Gervais who is still alive is F. Mollard, who constructed the cabane in the Aiguille du Gouté. His son keeps the little inn on the Col de Procot. You went higher up Mont Blanc on the west side than any other person had reached up to that date."

He adds in another letter: "I will make a reference to your expedition in a second edition of my work. The 30 francs paid to each guide is an important fact to record, and it will be an unusual pleasure to me to meet a lady whom I probably saw at St. Gervais 42 years ago! I was there in the month of August, 1856, and tried Mont Blanc from the Gouté side, but was driven back by a storm on the Aiguille. I believe your friend Octenier was one of my guides."

There was at that time a good deal of jealous feeling between the guides of Chamonix and St. Gervais before the final route to the top of the mountain was decided on, and probably that is why the ascent of the Hares was not more known.

The famous climber, the Rev. J. Llewellyn Davies (who died at the age of 90 in 1916), was asked what he would think of a young lady who had climbed Mont Blanc, he replied: "She would stand on one leg and play billiards with a cue." At that time a mace was the correct thing for a lady to use if she were so bold as to play billiards at all!

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It was a brave thing for Mrs. Marcus Hare to do, to trust her boy and girl to go alone; but the guide Octenier was well known, and he said that the expedition, although "très pénible," was "pas dangereuse," and that they should go for the small sum of 30 francs to each guide and less to the porters. There were six guides: Joseph Auguste Octenier, Jean Buttoud, Pierre Naviselle, François Gerfeaud, Joseph Duplan, and Henri Jacquemoud. Unfortunately, although their mother gave them permission to go up Mont Blanc, she made the stipulation that the boy and girl should not go to the summit, which they could easily have managed as regards strength, having become expert climbers on the Devonshire cliffs near their home, Rockend, at Torquay, where they did such dangerous things that a quarryman went and informed their mother of their daring, saying they went "where the goats would hardly go," and where they would not dare to go themselves.

The young heroine's diary of the expedition, expatiating on the "fun" of the adventure, is very amusing. She also describes her admiration for the head guide, for whom she afterwards "hemmed a handkerchief," which was given as an heirloom to his daughter when she married, on which occasion, as it was in Paris, Octenier came over to Ascot to see the Hares, and was taken to Windsor Castle. He told them then that when he had taken some men up the same route afterwards they had refused to believe Miss Hare had done the climb until they found her name in the bottle with her brother's.

Most of the diary is given, as Alpine climbers have been so much interested in it.

August 6th, Wednesday, 1856.

We left St. Gervais about 4 o'clock, I on a mule, Theodore walking, the people coming out of their doors to see us off.

We went for some way along the road to Nant Bourrant, stopping to buy bread at a baker's. We then turned into another road by which we had not been before. It was lovely weather, as good as we could have.

We bought some nails to put in our boots. We went a little out of our way to Octenier's châlet, where we saw his dogs, one of which had been up Mt. Blanc three times, but it could not go up with us, as it had puppies. The nails were put in my boots, and we saw Octenier's wife and two girls. We then left the châlet and went on through fields. We saw an eagle. We got on the Col de Boza, which was lovely with views all down the Valley of Chamonix. Got safely to the Pavilion-de-Belle-Vue, where we were to spend the night near

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the Glacier de Bionnassay. There were only two rooms with two beds in each. Theodore and I slept in one, and the guides spent their night on straw. There was a very noisy set of French or Suisse people in the room next us, who laughed and talked, which was not very agreeable when we wanted to go to sleep, as we had to set off very early next morning. The food was good—eggs and cream and honey.

In the books was an account of an ascent of Mt. Blanc in which Octenier was the guide, and he was very highly spoken of in everything.

Aug. 7th, Thursday, 1856.

Up at 2 o'clock, set off at 3. It was dark, and the stars magnificent. Went carefully. On reaching the mountain Lacha, day began to break, and there was a lovely view of the valley of Chamonix, the village, glaciers, mountains and aiguilles. We saw several pretty little mountain plants, the Arnica, and a little flower, of which one species is white and one purple, which is the last flower met with. Heard a fox bark. Scrambled up rocks, passed the Pierre Ronde, and walked over snow, and at length reached Monsieur L'Oiseau's Cabin. Got some wood and made a fire with wood pulled from another cabin, as our feet were nearly frozen. We had breakfast—sugar dipped in cognac, raisins and plums. Ether is indispensable in case anyone should be ill, and it is excellent for the head.

We passed Sausure's Cabin, and at length reached a slope of ice, in which we had to cut footsteps to pass. I was tied round the waist on to Octenier, besides having his arm to help me. One of the guides saw a chamois, and another a marmot, but we did not.

After crossing the "couloir" we began the ascent of the Aiguille de Goûté. It is composed of large stones and small ones, that slipped in avalanches under the feet, bearing down large and small ones together on their way to the bottom. It takes three hours very hard work scaling these rocks, and it was bitterly cold. Lovely crystals are found on the Aiguilles, some of which we brought home in a knapsack. Their weight is very heavy.

We saw the footmarks of chamois, and were very sorry not to see the animals themselves. At the top, which we reached at ½ past 11, we had dinner and rested, and then began the snow work. One guide was fastened with a rope to sound the crevasses. We walked over this snow a good way, only passing small crevasses, till at length I began to suffer from the

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rarity of the air. It takes away your strength. I was not tired, but I could only go a little way, and then pant and be exhausted. The guides proposed to carry me, and asked if we should turn back, but of course I was not so stupid, and we went on. I found out that the best way was to shut my eyes, as they had no protection, and the snow affected them, and to trust to the guides. They helped me by passing alpine-stocks under my arms, and a guide before and one behind held the ends. Octenier would have taken us to the top, but we had promised Mama not to go there. We saw a most beautiful view of Italy, the clouds being on the other side. We saw Monte Rosa, the Aiguille du Midi and Piedmont. It was magnificent. The top looked close to us, and the dome far below our feet.

We left a bottle with our names in it in some rocks above the Dome for the next comers.

The Descent

took 6 hours, much less than the ascent. We passed the crevasse where one of the guides got in, but being tied with ropes there was no danger. We came slipping and sliding down and rested on top of the Aiguille. I was not at all tired, and quite fresh, as it was only the rarity of the air which affected me. Octenier held me up by a cord and let me down the rocks. At the bottom I could not think why he hurried me over the "couloir" of ice. I made the best of my way across, as I was then told that as the sun was now hot the snow was now much softer than when we went up, and some cause or other, a chamois for instance, might have sent down a stone, and even a little one on the "couloirs" of ice come down with such tremendous force that it would knock anyone over to the bottom of the precipice. It is curious to watch the stones whizzing down and then flying over the rocks at the bottom. It is the greatest danger of the ascension.

The guides ate in the cabin while we rested, and then came the fun. I between Octenier and Naviselle set off sliding, tumbling and slipping at a great pace. We got some of the last flowers at the Pierre Rende to bring home. After leaving the snow we had a long wearisome way to go, and the guides whistled and sang to amuse us.

At last we got to the Pavilion, and found a party of people, who would stare at me.... Then we went to bed. My feet were sore from jumping over stones; we had crossed a valley full of them in the dark.

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Friday, August 8th.

We had our breakfast, and started for St. Gervais, I on a mule and Theodore walking.

We had sent on a guide to tell Mama that we should not come back until next morning, but we heard afterwards that he had gone to sleep in a hay-stack, and left her the whole night in suspense.

We retraced our Wednesday's steps, and as we neared the village we saw one of the guides running, and then cannons began to fire, and as we came still nearer my mule was stopped and a band struck up, and a man came forward and made a speech, for which I had to thank him, then the band went before us, and a crowd assembled, and as we went through the village people came to their doors to look at us, and when we reached the hotel we were presented with nosegays, and received much welcoming and rejoicings.

All this fuss was because I was the first lady who had made the ascension on this side of Mont Blanc.

The guides had a good dinner, and before they went we thanked them, and told them that we were very much satisfied with everything, and I sent a message to the "chief guide" at Chamonix, as he had laughed at my wanting to go to the "Grand Mulet."

The next morning Mon. and Madame Saladin (people staying in the hotel belonging to a good old Swiss family still well known near Geneva) wrote an account of our expedition to all the "gazettes."

The guide also took them to the glacier of Trait la Tête, which they said far surpassed any of the Chamonix glaciers in size and beauty, much larger than the Mer de Glace, with the purity and blueness of the Glacier de Bossons.

They walked on it "for 5 hours, and it would have taken 6 hours more to reach the top." Octenier milked some cows for them so that they might have something to drink on the way home. He promised to send them "honey, marmots, chamois skins and pheasants." The pension at the hotel was 6½ francs a day.

It is not surprising that little Miss Hare's diary ends on Tuesday the 12th:

"A fine day, but a day of sorrow, because we left St. Gervais, where we have had such pleasure."

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CHAPTER III

CAMBRIDGE AND SOUTH AFRICA

FRANT—CAMBRIDGE—SOUTH AFRICA

In spite of school troubles, the children had happy holidays. All consideration of difficulties in the future were put on one side, and the house was as usual filled to its fullest extent.

Harrow friends, the Colyer-Fergussons, the Miles and the Wollocombes,[1] came for "shoots," besides relations and older friends.

On one of these "shooting" days George caused some sensation by fainting at the last beat; fortunately one of the beaters caught him in his arms and saved his gun from going off. It was a cold snowy day, and it was found out afterwards that George had been so busy seeing to all the arrangements that he had not had any breakfast.

One of the grown-up friends who took a fancy to George at this time was Mr. George Macmillan. He was much amused when on one occasion he

[1] Max Colyer-Fergusson, 3 M.A.C.
Lancelot Miles, Captain, 8th Black Watch.
Eric Miles, Brigade Major, 54th Brigade, 18th Division.
Herbert Miles, in the 2nd K.O.S.B.'s.
Francis Wollocombe, Devonshire Regiment.
Bidlake Wollocombe.

[1] Herbert Miles and Francis Wollocombe were both killed on September 3, 1916.

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jokingly promised to publish anything that George might write, and the boy replied that he was sorry, but he had a previous offer from another publisher! At the time it was quite expected that George would make his name in literature, and even in after-life he always said that, if other plans failed, he would like to be a war-correspondent.

The year 1909 opened rather sadly. Mrs. Whidborne had to undergo an operation in London, and George wrote the following letter to cheer his mother:

Hammerwood, Jan. 1909.

DEAR MOTHER,

Fancy only two or three more days and you will be back here, if only in your room. But you will be able to have the window open. You will see a pale blue sky and birch tops pink against it in the sun. The morning and evening glow, too, reflected on Cansiron and the waves of light passing, always varied, overhead.

Then you will hear the children's voices and a little knock on the door, and in will come Baby to converse with you, which she can do very well, and loves it too. Only to-day I took her into your room and told her that you would soon be back, and she made me lift her on to the bed; then she lay down on your side of it, and cuddled up as if you were there and she was next you. Only a day or two and her dreams will be a reality.

Father and I went for a walk last night, this afternoon and again this evening. The usual rounds, the gardens, the pond and Big Hammerwood. The last two days have been perfect. Spring has been there without the buds. The birds have been singing as though they were longing to nest, but they are too wise. They

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know, if we don't, how cold it is at night. The only signs we get of that are the whitened trees and grass in the early morning and the ice on the lake, which bears all day. I have been on it myself, first holding father's hand in the approved style, and then on my lonesome. Father was too wise to trust himself on such a foolish errand. He doesn't see himself (as they say) with his head under the ice and his heels in the air.

Besides the anxiety about his wife's health, Mr. Whidborne had to arrange about the future of his three boys, both Charlie and Seymour having left Harrow at Christmas.

At this time many people were in favour of entering the Army through the University, and as Charlie had settled to be a soldier, the question was left undecided as to whether he should go straight to Sandhurst at the right age or go to Cambridge first. He eventually went to Ireland to a friend who had a boys' school there, and joined George after Easter at the two Mr. Maldens, at Henley House, Frant.

Seymour went to Repton through the influence of Mr. Bull, and George found a happy resting-place at Henley House. Given a few weeks, any boy sent to these crammers ought to pass any examination! When George left Harrow he had not touched any of the subjects set for the entrance examination for the University, but six weeks' hard work enabled him to get through quite comfortably.

As he could not go up to Cambridge until the autumn, he returned to Frant.

His letters will give an account of this time.

"I am enjoying myself quite well here, even the work. I have been doing Paley in the evenings. . . . I have

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been meaning to write you a long letter to read whilst lying in bed. . . . I wish I could think of something funny to tell you, but I can't. You should see me trying to play golf; I have only hit a ball about 4 times, and each time nearly chopped the ball in half. . . . I have just been given a present of a small silver fish for my watch-chain by Jill, a little girl. She bought it in Tunbridge Wells. There was a huge paper parcel on the table in front of me, and I had to unwrap it at breakfast. You need not be alarmed, she is only 5½!"

It is touching to notice how in this letter he tries to write cheerfully, but it was evidently an effort.

His attempts to make the best of things are obvious, but his spirits were less even than usual. His father and he had drawn very near together through his late trouble, but they were not alike in their love of study. Possibly the world of 1909 offered more distractions than it had done forty years before to a young man, or it may have been that the boy inherited a different disposition. He found steady work very difficult.

Henley Lodge.

I like this place awfully, but I do a lot of work. I don't mind it here though. I find the Paley quite interesting on reading the first 100 pages through for the 21st time. We only play hockey once a week, so I have to play golf.

He describes the life at Frant minutely, so that his mother could picture his doings, speaking affectionately of the little children in the house.

His friend Craven was with him, and frequent mention is made of what they did together. Of course, they missed the small excitements of their school-life

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very much, and there was the tender spot of memory which rankled, though they said little about it.

The schoolboy still comes out in these letters:

"I had to blot the last page with my pocket-handkerchief, so I am afraid it is rather in a mess."

The next few epistles are amusing:

"Ere I go to perch, I pen these words with a programme pencil. Thank you so much for your letter. It was very good of you not to allow the faintest soupçon of reproach (for slackness of correspondence on my part) to mar the general kindness of your letter.

"We have been having some awfully good tobogganing here. An hour or two on Thursday and 3 hours on Friday, from 8-11, on an ice-run.

"We built an ice-run about 50 or 60 yards long, and then made a snow bank, about 4 ft. high, at about this curve at the bottom . . . which, if you rounded it safely, carried you on about 20 yards. When you got to the bottom of the straight you were going about 30 miles an hour. So it was jolly hard to round the corner at all. It was almost like Swiss tobogganing, so "the Uncle" said, and he has been out there in the winter a good deal, and is a very good tobogganist. I have bought a toboggan. I think it will be very useful at home, if we have any tobogganing. I have written this word several times in different ways, perhaps by now you have found out what it means.

"Perhaps it is as well that I did not come home to-day, as I have been wearing a bow-tie—so—(a little picture)—and I daresay you would not have liked it.

"I had a nightmare last night. I dreamt that I had asked a certain person here (whom I don't like) to come home with me for the week-end. At dinner you were all there, and he suddenly said 'd——n' from some

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cause or other. I have forgotten the rest, but I woke up in a terrible fright. I was deathly pale, and my hair was on end!

"Is not this weather fun! (with a sarcastic accent on the last word).

"Tell Father that the long pipe is in splendid condition, whilst you can see to brush your teeth on the bowl of the short one.

"Only a week more in which to sweat up for my beastly 'little go.' I am sure I shan't pass, but are we downhearted? No! Not till the result is known, and then we shall be—Very!

"I am sure Hammerwood is looking lovely in the sleet. (Sarcasm.) Everything is (more sarcasm) (if you can read this). These two brackets do not mean that the two sentences are multiplied together, as 'the Boss' would have me believe."

"As you may see, I am writing this from the Hays. I like them awfully. I have been most energetic, and though this day is a slack day for recuperation after my efforts of the week, I attended morning service in the morning, bicycled 5 miles to the Puckles to attend a Bible-class which General Hay addressed in the afternoon, and again attended evening service—as hard a Sunday's work as any clergyman, but still I am afraid I am not quite right, because at dinner a lady mentioned a 'directoire' dress, and I knew what they were—and said they could be seen even in England!

"I have had an awfully good time here as they are such nice people. They have an awfully nice well-laid garden, for which I promised them a dozen of *your* bracken roots, like those you sent to someone the other day.

"There is not much news to give you, and as I don't

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read the papers here I cannot discuss the problems of the day, not even 'Violet Charlesworth.'

"P.S. As I have found some sealing-wax, I simply can't resist using it."

After the examination:

"I wish I were safe at Trinity, but I am not. . . . Next but one to me at the exam there was a clergyman, about 30 or 35, also there were two foreigners with bushey black beards and turbans.

"It was snowing hard all the way up, and Cambridge did not look very nice then, but it looks better to-day."

At Easter he was invited by an older friend, Mr. St. Maur Forester, to join a motoring party to the Pyrenees. Their cousin, Lady Perrott and Mrs. Dick-Cunyngham were the ladies of the party, and they went in two cars, "White Wings," a 90 h.p. Mercedes, built for the Prince Henri Touring competition for 1907, and a two-seater 40 h.p. Mercedes called "Baby."

George's communications were not many. It was a merry little party, and he was too busy enjoying himself to write much. He always managed, however, to get a good deal on a postcard.

White Wings, April 13.

Fair crossing. All right myself. Red car (myself and A.) broke down on road for Dieppe, and had to wait for chauffeur in the white one. St. M. took a wrong turn and went 60 kilos out of his way, or we should have been at Chartres to-night.

(Addressed—la plus petite Madelle. Whidborne):

Clermont, Ap. 15.

CHÈRE BÉBÉ,

Dites votre Papa que j'ai vu hier beaucoup des magpies, sparrows, finches, swallows, orioles, rooks

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and crows, aussi a woodpecker, hawk and a cock pheasant.

Mende, Ap. 15.

The scenery is lovely. We had two punctures to-day, and ran over 3 dogs. The country abounds with troublesome hounds, who rush to their death like fanatics. I saw some woodpeckers, stonechats and goldfinches to-day, also a Cambridge Beauty and a very large Fritillary. Having a very good time.

The party visited the wonderful "Gorges du Tarn," Milan, Le Puy, Rode and Rocamadour, with which George fell in love.

April 19.

Car broken down. Hope to arrive in England on Tuesday evening. This is a lovely place. Yesterday I went with a Harrow master called Prior to some wonderful limestone caves at Padirac, 13 miles off. I bicycled there on the village "pub" master's bike, which was like this (an old broken-down affair). We went 26 miles all together.

PICTURE POSTCARD.

July 6th.

I have seen several hoopoes, however you spell it, a nut-cracker, I think three eagles or very large hawks. . . . I am enjoying it awfully.

He went to the Pyrenees again in July with St. Maur Forester, both young men wishing to see more of the lovely old towns in that part. They crossed to Havre, and George wrote:

Saint Cere, June 27th.

We have been having an awfully good time, except that it has been raining most of it. I have just had to

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stop here a moment to draw the "patron," because he saw me scribbling on a piece of paper. I did an awfully bad one of him, which pleased him much. What's more, he made me write my name in full underneath. To-day is Sunday, so I can write a letter. We are right in the South of France already, somewhere near Rocamadour, at a place called St. Cère. We slept last night at Tulle, the night before at Orlèans, and the night before that on the Channel. The crossing was quite good.

(At the top of the sheet is a most exquisitely etched beetle.)

"This is a red beetle and very pretty, though you might not think it. Out of the window there is an old castle, very much prettier than this (another etching). If it was not so wet I should wish I had brought sketching materials with me.

"We had quince jelly for breakfast this morning for the first time this trip.

"The slope on which the castle stands is covered with vineyards."

July 29th.

I couldn't send this off before, because St. Maur Forester did not know from day to day where we should be the following night.

We are now in the Pyrenees, right in the midst of them. It is rather like Argentières, in that great folds of mist cover the mountains. Last night we were at Carcassonne; you will see it on the map. It has a very famous old walled city, which stands exactly as it did in the 12th century, or maybe it is even older.

We shall be back there next Monday—Grand Hotel Bonnet.

We are going to the Mediterranean to-morrow, and

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shall motor along by it, perhaps have a morning by the sea and bathe. We have bathed in two streams. The flowers are lovely, so is the colouring of the distances. Yesterday morning it was so hot we could hardly bear it, and our eyes were blinded by the glare. We started in light dust coats, and before the afternoon we put on thick coats and rain coats over them, and were glad of them.

Wednesday.

I am finishing this as I am having breakfast. We are just going out. I hope all are well. I am, so is Mr. Forester, so is Felix, the "shover." He is a very nice man and very funny.

A Picture Postcard.

Gorges du Tarn, July 4th.

This is what we are going to do this afternoon, if all goes well. I hope it will be fine. I suppose you will be going to Dawlish soon. This stream is as clear as glass. You can see large fish swimming about in it. (Illustration of fish.)

After George returned from France, it was settled that he should go to Champéry, in Switzerland, to coach with Mr. C. J. Murray at the Châlet Grenon. His uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Chambers, had a châlet for the summer at Champéry, and they saw much of each other. The Châlet Grenon was an ideal coaching establishment. Mr. Murray was an accomplished linguist, classical scholar and mathematician, and a noted chess player. He was a great favourite with his pupils, and he knew exactly how much freedom to allow them. Life here was made up of reading, climbing, tennis and dancing. The Dent du Midi,

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Tour Salières and Dents Blanches provided an excellent nursery for rock climbers, and it was here that George first learnt to appreciate the peculiar pleasure of risking his neck on the mountains! The life at Champéry was natural and delightful, and the twenty-four hours were crowded with small but pleasurable events. Very little sleep was needed in the bracing Swiss air, and Murray's pupils never appeared to sleep for more than an hour or two, and that was as often as not in one of the châlets or huts on the mountains. Most of the climbs at Champéry required a start to be made in the evening—a few hours' rest somewhere about 6000 feet up, and a fresh start at daybreak to reach the summit in the early morning. The day was spent lazily on the mountains, and one returned to Champéry in time to spend the evening at the Dent du Midi hotel in comparatively civilised surroundings. Often after dancing a few hours, parties would be made up again for another climb, and evening clothes were exchanged for climber's "rig," and off again to Bonavaux or some other place.

Two months went by quickly, and at the end of September George joined his family at Neuchâtel, where they had arrived from Grindelwald, after travelling down the Rhine, through the Black Forest to Switzerland. Charlie and a friend, Miss Deane, who had accompanied them, had returned to England, and George found only his father and mother, Seymour and Rita.

They spent a few days on the lake, and, among other places, visited the wonderful old town Estavayer, on the other side. They then returned to Paris, where George gave a dinner at the Hôtel de Louvre to some of his summer playmates, who were also going homewards. He had made many friends; some to last for

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life. Among these was Count Arco, a member of the well-known Bavarian family, whom he met at Champéry, where he lodged with his old nurse, Adèle Defargo, whose cousin Edouard was a well-known guide. Count Arco was a very charming man, and had a home in England, which he "loved." He invited George there constantly, gave him mounts for hunting, and took him with him to visit his sister, the German Ambassador's wife. Just before the war broke out he disappeared, and no news came of him till just after George was killed, when a letter arrived *via* Switzerland to his old friend, saying that he hoped before long to be seeing him again, and trusting that he might still look on him as a friend. Later on, having seen George's death in the paper whilst on leave in Switzerland, he wrote to Mrs. Whidborne as follows:

MADAM,

When I was on leave some weeks ago, I wrote to George. I then felt sorry that I had not done so long ago! Soon afterwards I read of his death. . . . Widders was dead, I was never to see him again!

I also read, "being mentioned in despatches and awarded the M.C. for bravery" . . . of course he would!

I could see by the dates that my letter could never have reached him in time, and so he would never know that I was just as devoted to him all through this war as I had been before—or would he have been convinced of it just the same?

I have never had the honour of meeting you, but I knew you through him, and you will understand if I venture to write to you, expressing my very deepest sympathy, and wishing to be allowed to share with you in your awful grief!

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Poor dear Widders. We first met at Champéry, years ago, and we were soon friends, and have been good friends ever since; he often came to stay with me at East Bridgford to hunt, and it was such a nice prospect to have him as a friend for a life-time . . . alas, it was for life-time!

Is it asking you too much to let me know of his last weeks, days, hours that he lived, what he may have thought, what he said, and would he have given me a thought, do you think? Or perhaps he was too ill and miserable to look back.

When you write, please remember that the smallest detail concerning his would-be comfort or sufferings will interest me; I would, of course, very much appreciate a photograph, but I am just as indebted to you for any information you will be kind enough to give me about him. Does his horse "the Major" still exist?

Hoping that you will favour me with a reply,

I am, dear Madam,

Yours sincerely,

(Count) Luigi Arco.

This letter shows how very differently the Germans view the ethics of war from the English.

. . . . . .

Things had altered greatly since his father was a young man, and as a consequence he was possibly more worried than he need have been at some of the traits that George developed when he went up to Cambridge. The previous generation had been so severely brought up that his father and mother wished their children to have a happier childhood than they had themselves, and very possibly the boy had been rather more indulged

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than was good for him. Before the war, it seemed to many as if the result of a more indulgent bringing up had been that young people looked on life as intended to be one long round of pleasure. The troubles of the last two years has, however, brought this attitude of mind to an abrupt conclusion, at least for many of the upper classes, and it has been found that the old motto, "Noblesse oblige," is still existent.

George, however, had never been spoilt—a large family is a very good preventive for conceit and self-satisfaction, and these were never failings of his. But his love of sport, carelessness about money and antipathy to solid work were an anxiety to his parents, who believed that true happiness can alone be found if a man uses the talents that have been given to him.

As we all know, brilliance is not of much use in the world without the more solid qualities of perseverance and self-control, which can alone be obtained by discipline. George had a great distaste for the keeping of accounts, and as his father was an exceptionally good man of business, having been trained in a most methodical way by his uncle for some years, he was anxious that his eldest son should also learn to realise the value of money. Unfortunately George disliked all business, and often said that he so hated responsibility that he would almost rather have no possessions than have to look after them. His charming manners helped him to escape the consequences of his carelessness so often that he did not suffer as many people do when they neglect such important items as the time of trains or the taking of money or tickets for some function. An acquaintance would appear just at the right moment and lend him money and become his firm friend for life, and George would come home and report that without a

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ticket he had been given "one of the best places at the show, because everyone was so awfully kind."

He would, to his father's consternation, continue travelling about Europe after he had come to the end of his resources. He would make friends with the Consuls and enlist their help. His friendship with one of these Good Samaritans in Switzerland enabled him to return with his brother to England when they were stranded there at the beginning of the war. There was, however, one exception to this good luck, and he was very much surprised when on one occasion in Paris he applied to the Consul for help and was refused, the sensible man saying that he did not lend £5 notes to boys in Paris without a letter from someone in authority.

George left no debts, but it had been a hard struggle to learn that the "Nemesis" of spending is payment.

He was careless, allowing himself to be robbed of clothes and money without noticing it, until he wanted the thing that was missing. Of course, this was partly because he had to live rather a nomadic existence at times, but latterly he largely overcame these thoughtless habits, and had he lived, his friends confidently looked forward to his managing the family affairs in the same wise way as his father. It was quite pathetic later on to hear him insisting on the necessity for discipline in the army or rejoicing that his "honour" was especially given for "good work done," when one remembered what it had cost him to acquire the habits which made him such a splendid officer.

He spent the first part of his time at Cambridge with Hiram Craven, but later on shared "diggings" with his other friend, Derrick Gunston.

There is no doubt that as the head boy of a preparatory school feels lost when he goes to his public school,

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so the "big man" at a public school, in sport or learning, has to realise in his first year at the University that he must once more start at the foot of the ladder.

George, who had acquired a certain amount of independence in his long stay in Switzerland, found the regular discipline rather irksome.[1]

He wrote from Cambridge in the autumn of 1910:

"I have been just going to write for several days.

"I have not cut a single lecture yet.

"We were 'matriculated' yesterday, being W. I had to sit in the Senate-House for two hours, whilst a chap who began with A. or B. got out in 5 minutes, and I only had to sign my name.

"I was put down for the Pitt Club yesterday. I think all the other Harrovians who were put down were either cricket or footer flannels, so I am afraid I shan't get in this time. There are about 100 people up for about 50 vacancies, and an awful lot of Etonians up too.

"I am playing for the old Grovites against the School on Nov. 6th (we don't have any lectures or essays on Saturday). It was a great honour to be asked to play.

"I only got a 2nd class in the French, but I don't mind that. I never expected to pass at all, much less get a first.

"I am learning boxing, partly for exercise, partly because I think it will be useful.

"I had tea with the R.'s to-day. They are frightfully

[1] *Note.*—Among some notes for an essay on "Greatness," in reference to Cambridge, he wrote: "Alma mater of course honours herself with maternal pride and all her sons who have said and done great things, but at the same time as a lioness with her whelps, she puts them in their right place. Every man who has done anything, considers himself great as do many who have done nothing, and under her care men get sorted out and pigeon-holed."

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rabid Suffragists. They said you both belonged to some Suffragist Association. I said I was sure you did not—you were far too sensible. However, I told them that I took the side of the Suffragists at the Grove, which they said was a sign of grace.

"Do you think that there will be an election in January? If so, we shall come back late and stay up here longer. They would not dare to have an election here in term time.

"You will be glad to hear that I have been elected into the Pitt Club, which is very nice for me.

"As far as I can see, I shall not be able to do any drawing or painting here. I have to get up at 8 for the boxing lessons, as I don't like to do it when there are many people there. Ordinarily I don't get up till 9, but I don't go to bed till about 11.30. I have to write an essay this evening."

"Sorry my letter is so late, but I have got nothing to say except that I am alive, and even that is uncertain. I do hope that you are better. I think personally that bed is just as good a place as anywhere else in which to be at this time.

"The little dog is still alive and well; in fact, too well, as it destroys a lot of my things."

His mother had been very ill, and he wrote:

"Only one week until I see you. . . . I am looking forward very much to seeing you all. I hope you are much better. What I think is so splendid of you is that you always contrive to get the worst part of your illnesses over by the holidays, so that we can and do have a nice time (which we should not, if it were not for you).

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"Did I tell you that the thing I sent to the Granta was printed?"

Unfortunately this time his mother was still very ill when he came home. The cares of a big family and house, with delicate health, had been too much for her, and several unsuccessful operations had made her a complete invalid.

For the first time there were no Christmas festivities and no visitors, except for shooting parties.

All the children but George, who had returned to Cambridge, developed whooping-cough early in the year. Seymour, after going back to Repton, showed signs of having it, and was promptly sent home in order to have the long convalescence there. This was a great pleasure to his family, and he enjoyed the home-life with his father and sisters, in whose pursuits he always took great interest. It was fortunate that a hospital nurse was still in the house, as influenza broke out, claiming Seymour as its first victim. He recovered quickly, but his father soon after succumbed to this dreaded disease, and with the added complication of pneumonia, became dangerously ill. It was a great mercy that the services of a second nurse, known and loved by all the family, was obtainable at this juncture. Nurse Garlett and Nurse Smith were indefatigable in their care, and Dr. Wallis, the friend and physician of the family, did all that he could to help them during this anxious time.

It had been thought best to leave George at Cambridge as long as possible, but his friends tried to prepare him by letter for what might be in store for him. On Sunday, February 13th, his father seemed to be getting rapidly worse, and he was sent for. He had to taxi the

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ninety miles from Cambridge, as the Sunday trains did not fit in, and he afterwards revealed what a terrible time he had gone through during this drive.

His father was conscious when he arrived, and able to have the older children in and out of his room, and even made one or two little jokes with George, as, for instance, about the stimulant which the doctor had ordered him, in spite of his having been a teetotaller for years.

As the boys said good-night to him for the last time, he looked at them fondly and said to his wife, "They are such dear boys—such nice manly fellows."

On February 14th the call came for which he was so ready. His talk of the future had been most beautiful, full of hope and trust, and even in his delirious moments it was of the "marvellous" and "wonderful" things that those on this earth do not seem able to understand. He saw "visions" that only come to those who have walked with God all through their lives, and he bore all his sufferings with courage and patience. Being a strong man, it was terrible to see the battle with Death, and George felt it most acutely. When the painful struggle was ended and the beautiful expression told only of "Perfect Peace," the boy kept up bravely, and took his place manfully as the eldest son, in spite of the anguish of his mind.

The veil is lifted from these sacred moments, as it will explain to many certain ways of looking at things that George developed after this.

It was a crushing blow to one who up to this time had always put on one side everything disagreeable. He said that he had not been greatly troubled by the letters bringing news of his father's danger, knowing how often his mother had recovered after being seriously

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ill, but that he had besought the Almighty for his father's life throughout that long drive from Cambridge, and as his request had not been granted, he had felt resentful.

Friends wrote him beautiful letters about following in his father's steps, but all that he wanted was to drown this new and miserable feeling of grief. The sense of duty which had been implanted in him came to the rescue, and in the year or two which followed this sad time it saved him from making shipwreck of his life.

He said afterwards that it was very important, in his opinion, to send boys to schools and regiments with good names, as knowing that they had to keep up the reputation of their fore-runners was such a splendid restraint—for even if they did not mind for themselves, they did not like to think that an escapade of theirs might be reported in the papers as having been committed by "an old Harrovian" or "Etonian," and thus sully a great name, which they were in honour bound to keep untarnished.

It was settled, perhaps unwisely, that as George's nerves had received such a severe shock, he should not return at once to Cambridge, and after a short time at home, he elected to go for one of his solitary wanderings to Brittany.

He did not write much, and most of his correspondence is missing about this time, but the following extracts show his usual descriptive powers:

"A man sits at the same table with me who eats a whole chicken or a whole piece of veal or a whole cart-load of salad for each meal, he drinks 3 or 4 large bottles of the Riper Heidseich Champagne at 16 francs a bottle every day with his meals and drinks claret and

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white wine as well. He talks only a little French of the German variety, and what there is of mine is English, so the waiter interprets my English-French into German-French and vice versa."

The description of this "character" evidently came in instalments on picture postcards to his brothers and sisters, but the others are missing.

He wrote from Caen and St. Michel, sending a picture of a wheel:

"This is where they put the prisoners when they are naughty. The rope was let down to the bottom of the rock and provisions tied on to it. The prisoners (it took 6 of them to move it) walked round and turned the wheel."

He made friends with some fellow-travellers, and motored about with them. The beginning of the following letter is missing:

"We saw one of the oldest streets in France, and a lovely avenue called the 'Boulevard des Anglais.' All this part belonged to the English at one time, didn't it?

"After that we motored over to Dinard. We all went to sleep; we had had such a good lunch, and the motor was soothing. I won't say it was because the cider was too strong, because they were stingy at the hotel, and had put water into it. . . . I can't tell you much about the scenery in consequence till we came to Dinard. It is like this—but perhaps you have been there and know all about it. The creek was a lovely blue, and we went down to the sands. There are lovely rocks stretching far out into the sea, and very dangerous. We watched the evening come on. . . . At dinner I found that there were three lots of people in the hotel

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who had come over to St. Michel for the Sunday before, to whom I had just spoken.

"There was a Mrs. W., who had a little boy (at school at Winchester), not bad but spoilt; she had a 'simply lovely daughter' (I quote Mrs. W. here), who was at school at Paris, and who was coming to Dinard in a day or two—and 'I should so much like you to see her, and you would get on so well together,' until I got embarrassed and said that I was not a 'lady's man,' and that even if I had been, I had to get back to England now."

He describes the other people graphically, and then goes on to say:

"Next morning I got up early and walked up a steep hill that looked over St. Malo, and did a pencil sketch. I then went back to the hotel, and saw the M's off. After lunch I crossed the creek in a little motor boat for 2d. It was quite rough; Charlie would not have liked it at all—and I came to St. Malo. It has ramparts all round it.

"As I passed the big church there I saw a huge crowd, and went in and found that there was a confirmation going on in it. About a couple of hundred tiny boys and girls—the girls in white like little brides, with veils and wreaths of white roses, the boys with white ties and bands on their arms. There was also a big band of little boys dressed as Zouaves, with trumpets, and bigger ones dressed like sailors, with drums. It looked very nice in the church, which was dark and mysterious. The little white things showed up well, and the crowds of spectators faded away into the sides of the church. The queer thing about it was that none seemed to be paying attention to anything;

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the children were all turning round and looking at each other and the priests with their tonsures and everything else. They were much too young to be confirmed."

Of course, he ran out of money, simply because he would not trouble to write for it, and at last sent home an unstamped letter with "pay the other end" written on it.

He went to Paris and tried to borrow from a friend there; he could never see that borrowing was a wrong principle, if debts were paid in the end!

Part of this letter, which was very long, is in existence:

"I was bored to death, and wanted to get to Dieppe and England, but the next morning I had to pay the bill, and found that I had not enough money. So I went to K.; you remember him, don't you? At last by dint of enquiry I found the atelier in which he worked. When I opened the door I was surrounded by a number of maniacs who, when I made a remark, laughed and jumped up and down. I saw an older man, so I went up to him. As I was coming, he beckoned, but when I reached him, he turned round and went out of a door. Then he came to me again, but this time I told him all about himself in English, and as much as possible in French. He did not seem to mind. I suppose he had heard it before.

"Then I saw a quiet man in a corner, and went to him. He was an American, and said that K. had left for his fatherland 'depuis un mois.' So I was snookered!

"Then I walked (I could not afford to drive) to the consul ¾ of an hour away, and got him to send Uncle Theodore a telegram for some oof,—but it has not come

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yet, and here I am, sleeping and faring sumptuously at the expense of the hotel, but between meals unable to get a shave or buy a cigarette. I have to make the most of meals, as I can't get anything to eat between lunch and dinner, as one has to pay cash for tea.

"When I go out I have to walk slowly for fear of getting an appetite. I can look into the shops. I went by mistake into one and bought something, and then had to tell them that I had no money.

"They thought I was mad!

"I can only go to places which are free, and then I can't tip the man who looks after my hat.

"I can write this letter because the paper is free and a pen and ink is provided, but where the stamp is coming from is more than I can say. I shall have to go out and hold someone's horse or run a message.

"This morning, coming back from the English Church (that was free, but I had to come out before the collection), I ran into Miss C. . . .

"You need not be afraid of my frequenting music halls or going the pace too blindly, because you have to pay to go in.

"I have done one or two little pencil sketches.[1]

'My beard is growing so long that I have to pull the hairs out one by one, as I did not bring a razor.

"I was drawing birds in a shop when two men came in and talked to me. One was a sculptor named Haseltine, and the other a great bird painter named Miriet. He asked me to tea in his studio to-morrow at 4, so I think I shall go. I should think it was worth while."

The looked-for money came at last, and he returned to England, after stopping at Dieppe, from which place

[1] The letter is filled with little sketches.

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he wrote a postcard commenting on the "fine cathedral and lovely old red-tiled church."

His mother, who up to this time had been more like his sister than parent, had now to assume a different rôle. She realised that, with three sons just growing up, the position might be a difficult one. Owing to her intimacy with her many brothers, it was not so hard as it might have been, as she was enabled to understand boyish troubles better than many mothers. She felt that strong objection must not be made to things that were not definitely wrong, even if these things were not exactly in accordance with a parent's pre-conceived ideas, and that the best way to gain the confidence of a young boy or girl is to let them talk, without disapproving of what they are saying at the beginning.

She considered that with questions relating to conscience, it was best to throw the responsibility on the children themselves after they had heard the "pros and cons," and that with boys it was desirable to drive with "a very loose rein."

In consequence, though mistakes were probably made, she became the friend and confidante of her three sons, and many a conversation took place on all sorts of topics in her bedroom between ten and twelve o'clock at night, which, no doubt, helped to keep them in the straight path, and which made mother and sons very intimate, in spite of her invalid life.

Unfortunately just after his father's death she was especially ill, and George, who had returned to Cambridge, was far from strong. He was never able to take care of himself, and therefore, if he had anything the matter with him, it was always much worse than it need have been.

In the long vacation he went over to Ireland for some

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fishing, accompanied by his uncle, Eustace Strong. They visited Galway, and saw something of Irish life. On George's return home, however, he was still in a very nervous condition, and it was settled that he should leave Cambridge for a time and travel. A trip to South Africa was planned, and one of his uncles, who was then curate at Walworth, obtained leave of absence to go with him.

SOUTH AFRICA

George and his uncle intended to go first to the Cape, then on to Lindley and Rhodesia, ending up with Uganda and East Africa. Many kind friends and neighbours gave them introductions, which added greatly to the pleasure of their tour.

Amongst near Hammerwood neighbours who had taken an interest in George ever since he came there as a small boy were Mr. Eardley Wilmot Holt of Ashurstwood House, Miss Howard, a friend of Sir Abe Bailey, and Mr. Hausberg of Furnace Farm, who owned land in East Africa.

Mr. Holt, who was himself a keen sportsman, gave George an introduction to Mr. Selous, the big game hunter, who asked him to lunch and imparted to him many useful hints for his "safari" trip.

Miss Howard wrote about them to South African friends, even mentioning them to the steward on the boat going out; whilst Mr. Hausberg's kindness made all the difference to the comfort of their shooting. The Rev. J. Rodgers also gave them letters of introduction to missionaries, which George's uncle, Eustace Strong, found very useful.

They left Southampton in the "Dunluce Castle" on

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November 5th, and Admiral Winnington-Ingram, who went to see them before starting, wrote to Mrs. Whidborne: "Modwyn and I went on board the 'Dunluce' to-day to have lunch with Eustace and George. We left about half an hour before the ship sailed. What a dear boy George is! He insisted on leaving his lunch (we had only time for part) and coming back some of the way with us. He was in very good spirits, and scoffed at the idea of being sea-sick."

Although they saw many beautiful sights on that tour, they often said afterwards that one of the most beautiful had been the Southampton Water as they steamed down it that day past the New Forest.

George was very much pleased to find amongst the passengers a previous acquaintance to whom he had taken a great liking—Mr. Maurice Knatchbull-Hugessen.[1]

The sea was very rough when they started, but calm weather came on November 9th, and the passengers soon began to fraternise. Entertainments and sports went on gaily, only being interrupted by the rest of the Sabbath Day. George's name was amongst the successful competitors no less than three times. At the Fancy Dress dance he won the prize by appearing as a girl robed "à la mode" in a tight skirt, when his uncle remarked that he looked like "a wicked edition of his mother."

[1] Lieutenant Maurice Knatchbull-Hugessen, M.C., Grenadier Guards, who was killed on September 25, was the youngest son of the late Rev. Reginald Knatchbull-Hugessen and of Mrs. Knatchbull-Hugessen, of 1 Foulis-terrace, S.W. He was born in 1888, and educated at St. Aubyn's Rottingdean, Radley, and Balliol College, Oxford. He joined the Royal Fusiliers as a private in October, 1914, and received a commission in the Grenadier Guards in March, 1915. He was mentioned in despatches and awarded the Military Cross in September, 1915.

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The young men were quite sorry to leave their friends of the boat, with several of whom they renewed acquaintance later.

On their arrival they fell in love with the climate, and enjoyed the wonderful bathing at Muizenburg, near Cape Town. They lunched at Sir Abe Bailey's house, which was built on a site which had been bought by Cecil Rhodes, who had intended to build a house on it for himself, and which was close to the cottage where he died.

The beauty of the house, with its old Dutch prints and furniture, much impressed George, and he and his uncle often spoke of the lunch, with its choice delicacies, to which they were entertained by Sir Abe's charming steward, Mr. Cooper. George wrote:

Mount Nelson Hotel,
Cape Town.

It is lovely out here. If Lloyd George (isn't the election getting exciting?) gets in again, we shall have to sell everything in England and buy a farm out here. It would be very nice for Charlie, Seymour and myself, but I am afraid not so nice for you and the girls. Every day is blazing hot, and one does not expect rain. We met some very nice people called Parry on the boat. He is mining engineer at one of the mines on the Rand, also a fellow called Hugessen, a friend of Siordet[1]; he has gone to work under Lionel Philipps at Johannesburg.

[1] Gerald Caldwell Siordet. He volunteered as soon as the war broke out in 1914. In July, 1915, he went to the front in France, having received a commission in the Rifle Brigade, 13th Battalion. In the advance on the Somme, July 10th, 1916, he distinguished himself by conspicuous bravery in the field, and on September 23rd was awarded the Military Cross. "After his company commander

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We went one day to call on Judge Hopley, and drove round Table Mountain together. We then went to his place and had a game of croquet.

The Hopleys were extremely kind to him, and he saw a good deal of them. George also climbed the mountain, and reported it "quite a difficult bit of rock!" There is a reservoir at the top, and the effect of the "table-cloth" was very wonderful in the golden rays of the setting sun.

They spent ten days in Cape Town at the Mount Nelson Hotel, famous in war days, and then went up to the country by train, constantly passing by big dry river beds, reminding them of Randolph Churchill's comment on South Africa, "Rivers without water—birds without song—flowers without scent!"

The travellers were to stop at Arundel, but when they arrived at the station, which was on the veldt, and got out at 2 a.m., they found that their luggage had been left in the train, and a solitary negress who appeared could give them no help. It was dark, and no one was there to meet them, as they had expected. They discovered a house, but it was empty, and no amount of shouting brought anyone. Fortunately they had their sleeping bags with them, so they put their hand luggage round them, and lay down to sleep by the side of the line, George being nervous lest there should be pigs about who would take a fancy to his face!

had been killed during an attack, he rallied the company under heavy fire, and consolidated the position gained. When the order to withdraw was given he brought the battalion back to our trenches, remaining on duty until disabled himself." (From the *Times* of September 23rd, 1916.) On October 28th, 1916, he left for Mesopotamia, and on his arrival at Basra, January 4th, 1917, was attached to the 6th Royal Lancashire Regiment. He was killed in action on the Tigris line on February 9th following.

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At 5.30 they awoke to see a tall young Englishman looking at them in a distracted way, and so at last they met their host, Sir Abe Bailey's nephew, Mr. Clapham.

The farms, with their acres of orchards, pear, plum, peach and apricot, were visited in a Cape cart drawn by four mules. When they arrived at a farm the owner and his wife would warmly welcome them, and give them refreshment in the "stoep" or verandah looking on to a garden full of roses and carnations. Here they would eat strawberries and sometimes drink the pure juice of the grape. Football "shop" would be discussed with the younger farmers, and then the valuable stock would be shown off—different kinds of sheep or horses. Of course, they visited ostrich farms, and George was once surrounded by young birds, who tried to peck the buttons off his coat. Wherever they went they were received with generous hospitality. A week-end was spent at Grootfontein in Sir Abe Bailey's bungalow, where they saw the originals of Thorburn's pictures of game, which much interested them. They visited a Boer "with a keen sense of humour," who chuckled loudly at George's sallies of wit.

On December 13th they arrived at Colesberg, the first "dorp" or South African town they had seen, composed of two long streets; every house with a verandah. The usual large river, spanned by many bridges and in the usual low-water condition, ran through the town. The want of water seems to be one of the great drawbacks to farming in South Africa, but in many places George found that it had been overcome by more scientific knowledge and with the aid of capital.

The travellers reached Lindley on December 17th, where they were to spend Christmas with George's uncle, Roland Chambers, who was the Resident Magis-

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trate there. George much enjoyed this time, and made great friends with this uncle, his mother's eldest brother, who had lived during most of his nephew's lifetime in Africa.

Lindley is a Dutch town tucked away in a hollow on the rolling veldt, with about five hundred houses, one storied and roofed with zinc. There were no big trees, and every plant and shrub had been put into the ground since the War, when Lindley was occupied and re-occupied no less than seven times in one fortnight.

The Residency gave George a great sense of pleasure, being the first absolutely English interior he had seen since leaving home, and he was glad to spend the first Christmas Day since his father's death with those who had also felt his loss keenly.

He wrote home:

Office of the Resident Magistrate,
Lindley, O.R.C.,
Xmas Day, 1910.

We have just come back from church. It does seem funny. I keep thinking about you all day, and am glad that by the time this reaches you Xmas will be well over. I helped to pack some little children's stockings last night, and never realized before that probably grown-ups have much greater pleasure in packing them, than the children in unpacking them! When we got back last night I got into a hammock on the verandah, with only a blanket over me, so that when it got cold, just before dawn, I should wake up. About 2 a.m. I woke up, and filled two of my socks with odds and ends and hung them up in my two uncles' rooms. We are going to have a Xmas lunch with the

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bank-manager, and drive out to a farm this afternoon for tea and supper with the hotel-keeper in his car.

South Africa is a very funny place; it is quite possible to find a gentleman behind the bar or counter when you walk in.

Clarendon Hotel,
Lindley, O.R.C.

This is the hotel where we come up for our meals every day. Uncle Roland is awfully decent. I can't think how he has managed to live out here for twenty years and be still gay and debonair; he is going to give a Xmas dance to the children here on Tuesday. They all love him. Lindley is a tiny place, but we enjoy ourselves very much. I sleep on the verandah; we play tennis and bathe in the river and watch Uncle Roland administering justice. . . . With luck he may come home with us.

From his uncle, Roland Chambers:

Lindley,
Jan. 2nd, 1911.

Dear George's visit was an unmixed pleasure. He is so like you in face. . . . He is the dearest boy, and we are quite chums. He has an intensely artistic temperament, which, I fancy, often gets badly jarred in uncongenial surroundings; on the whole he is enjoying himself very much. . . . I was dreadfully sorry to let him go.

Letter from Roland Chambers:

Dec. 28th, 1915.

Amongst the things that I have left undone, I rather fancy that I never acknowledged the receipt of the water-colour drawing by dear George of the Residency

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at Lindley. Yes, he did it whilst staying with me, and I am so glad to have it. It was indeed a happy and most ideal time for George, Eustace and myself. The sort of time which, with luck, only comes once in a lifetime. How we all enjoyed it. The picture brings back to me memories of George, because he always slept on the verandah on my camp bed, and refused to get up at any (South African) reasonable hour, and so had to be routed out with a cold sponge, after calling me very many names. I love to think of his visit, because he got such a lot of fun out of it and was so much liked by the Aborigines. I really got to know him then, as one must when you are thrown together in a bachelor establishment. I had quite forgotten his taking the sketch, but now I remember it.

From Lindley George went on alone to Johannesburg, leaving Eustace to visit friends in Basutoland. He stayed with Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen, and had a very good time, but when his uncle rejoined him ten days later, he found him over-doing himself, both physically and financially!

Johannesburg is not unlike a large English city, but the enormous mounds of white sand, glistening like snow in the bright sun and sending off clouds of white dust when the wind swept their sides, betrayed the purpose of this gigantic hive of human activity. At a distance these mounds look like a wall of huge white forts guarding the line of the Reef.

George was too busy to write much:

Athenæum Club,
Johannesburg.

Yesterday Hugessen and I went out and spent the day with the Parrys. Unfortunately it rained, and we

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slept all the afternoon! There was a magnificent sunset in the evening, and the shafts of the mines and the dumps of used-up sand stood very black against it. The other day Hugessen took me to tea with Lionel Phillips. I had five games of croquet with him. . . . I am going to see a very good collection of etchings, belonging to a man called Brandon Davis, this afternoon, and then on to tea with a lady, Mrs. Sevenoaks, who is getting together all the passengers of the Dunluce Castle.

I stayed at the Carlton for the first two nights, and then Hugessen got me made a temporary member of this club, which is a very nice one.

The Carlton Hotel, which George mentions, is a wonderful place, supposed by the South Africans to be equal to or even to surpass the one in London, but this our travellers did not agree to, and were very glad to get to the "cosy" and restful Athenæum.

Johannesburg.

I had a very strenuous time yesterday. A swim before breakfast, a game of croquet, a round of golf, and lunch, then four sets of tennis, a swim, tea, and then another round of golf. Dinner, and after dinner I went to hear Madame Carrẽno, who is supposed to be the best living pianist. Don't you think there ought to be a statue of Physical Energy erected to me, as well as to Rhodes? Rhodes is a great man in this country. They can't talk of anyone else.

I went over the reduction works of a gold mine a few days ago. I saw and lifted about £5000 worth of gold. I could not have run off with it if I had tried, it was so heavy, besides all the men in the room simply

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bristled with revolvers. I have not had occasion to use my revolver yet! Johannesburg is quite civilized, but they would not like to hear me say that here.

Letter to his Aunts:

Johannesburg.

I am now in Johannesburg, and owing to the kindness of a friend I met here I have been made temporary member of this very excellent club. Last night I was looking through the "Temporary Members' Book," and once or twice came across the name J. Elverson, who was in the Artillery and who came from the barracks at Pretoria. With my usual sagacity I came to the conclusion that it was a relation of mine! By the way, I wonder how he is now.

This is summer time. Unfortunately, as in England, the summer time is also the rainy season of the year. Still in a week we shall be making our way up to the Falls. Once there we shall have all the heat we want. I believe it will be the hottest season up there. Africa seems to agree with me, I have been feeling awfully well (unberufen).

They have got a very fine picture gallery. There is a bust by Rodin; two Sargents, *one* very nice, both sketches and not portraits. The "Return of the Spies," by Frank Brangwyn, which was in the Academy a few years ago. Three rather good things by a man called Manchini or something, and several other very nice things.

I have also been down a gold-mine; we rushed down a steep incline in a "skip," a sort of truck, down several thousand feet; if anyone had lifted their head it would have been knocked; then down there in the earth we saw the Kaffirs, mostly stripped to the waist, boring and

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shovelling. Their brown skins fairly glisten, for it is very hot down there, in spite of the ventilation, just like a green-house.

I went over to Pretoria one day and saw Paul Kruger's home and the museum and an excellent zoo, and afterwards had lunch with Paul Methuen, the son of the General who is officer in command of all the troops in South Africa. Gladstone has just left.

Hotel Imperial,
Bloemfontein, O.F.S.

I have just missed the mail by an hour or so. I am so sorry. From Johannesburg we came here. As usual everyone is frightfully hospitable, and on our arrival here we were made members of the two clubs and the golf-club. We came out in the boat with the manager of the Castle Brewery here, and also director of the hotel, so he made us most comfortable and shewed us over the Brewery, which was very interesting. I play golf most mornings. To-day I went out to a Government experimental farm with a very nice Irishman called Fleetwood Rynd, related to some Irish Duke or King or something, and a horsedealer, as most of the Irish are out here. We went over the farm and saw their sheep—merino as usual here. There were some very fine rams, also a lot of North (dark red) and South (light red) cows and bulls. There was one enormous old bull. They had two quite nice stallions and some mares. The great stuff to grow out here is lucerne; it is the third clover; we have red and white, this is the blue.

I am going across to Kimberley to-morrow, where I am going over another farm. I am very much interested in farming, but then I always have been.

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I shall probably go over a diamond mine there, and will write and tell you about it. . . .

Uncle Eustace went over the leper hospital to-day, which is pretty average beastly, I should imagine!

I ate about 15 nectarines off a tree at the farm I went to to-day, Groote Vlei. Groote is spelt with a G, and pronounced with a something you never imagined could exist! Vlei is, as you know, pronounced "Fley."

The Victoria Falls Hotel,
Zambesi, S.A.

I left Bloemfontein at 10 o'clock on Monday. At 2 o'clock, after a 90 mile journey, I arrived at Kimberley. I went to the hotel, and then went to call on the manager of the brewery, to whom I had a letter of introduction. He drove me round and shewed me the sights. The usual ubiquitous statue of Rhodes and the War Memorial, a nice simple Rhodesian stone monument, beside which is placed a cannon, made in the De Beers workshops during the siege and designed by one of the mining engineers.

Next day I arose early from my couch, and now this is all one day's work!! I went to see a "parcel" of diamonds, which were to go back to England by the next mail. Two long tables covered with diamonds, sorted in little heaps according to colour and quality, from yellow to green or aquamarine up to the best of all—the brilliant, sparkling, not white but "diamond." They were all uncut, but some were quite big and some were perfectly octohedrons; while I was looking at one lot, I put my sleeve bang in the middle of a lot of small ones; if the man I was with had not been well known, they would have looked carefully at my elbow, to see if it had any grease on it. After that we drove out to see

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the Walleston Diamond Mine. I can't describe all that here, but we drove on a mule trolley for an hour. For a mile or so the ground was all enclosed by barbed wire netting. The natives sign on for three years, during which time they are not allowed outside this wire fence, and at the end of three years they are kept in a house of detention and searched all over, inside and out, for diamonds, which they often try to secrete on them. They have drying floors of over 1000 acres, where they spread out the "blue ground," i.e., diamondiferous soil, or rock, rather, to be acted on by the elements and crumbled up by steam-rollers. We saw the original open pit or quarry, the largest hole ever made in the earth by the hand of man. It is over two miles round, and so deep you can't see the bottom; as the edges are always giving way, I was in rather a funk of standing close and looking down.

Then back to lunch, and after lunch I drove out eleven miles in the blazing sun in a dog-cart to see a stud-farm belonging to De Beers, and then on to a mule-stud two miles further on, and drove back just in time to catch the evening train leaving at 8 o'clock for Bulawayo.

Don't you think that was rather an energetic day? Since then I have been three nights and two days in the train, stopping for lunch at Bulawayo, and to-day I have just reached the Falls.

This is a very nice hotel. Rhodesia is the finest country I have been in. It is the only place that has made me want to stop, and I begin to feel a traitor to England. I can't describe it. It is a big open forest, with streams and such green that I have not seen since I left England. The sky is blue and the butterflies abound, and there is dust, dust, everywhere.

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The Victoria Falls Hotel,
Zambesi, South Africa, 1910.

To-day I arrived at the Falls; I won't try to describe them to you except without adjectives, as if I was explaining a proposition of Euclid.

On arriving I changed my clothes, as they were very dirty from the effects of travelling, and walked across the Falls Bridge: along a path and down, right down, a winding rocky path, until it grew hotter and hotter and more and more like a greenhouse. Gradually palms and ferns grew more common, and trailing "lian," as I think they are called, trailed down from the trees and wound along the path like big snakes, and disappeared up another palm—without beginning and without end. The butterflies were lovely; only they and the orchids, which were in flower, made me think so strongly of Father, that I felt rather beastly and went up again. He would love this place, and all the butterflies and birds and beetles and caterpillars are so strange and brightly coloured. I feel I want someone to discuss them with; I am sure there will never be anyone quite the same. I think that sort of thing makes it become beastlier every day instead of easier. Poor Hugesson, the boy who came out with us on the boat—his father died the day before yesterday.

In the afternoon I rested, and at about half past four, I went through what they call the "Rain Forest" to a place called "Danger Point," which juts out over the Falls. (Here is a little sketch.) It was so wet with spray that it was like rain, and I got soaked to the skin. I went all along the Falls, which extend for 1¼ miles, and looked at them from different points; there are rainbows all along, the first being a nearly perfect circle, with two small ones inside it, like the coloured rim and

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hub of a huge bicycle wheel. Then I climbed down, at the direction of the man who was with me, and put my hand in the waterfall at the far end. We walked along through the Rain Forest, where tropical flowers and orchids grow, owing to the perpetual fall of the spray. And then home.

I can't tell you what the Falls are like, but the whole Zambesi, one mile and a half wide, falls into a narrow gorge a couple of hundred feet across, which extends for thirty or forty miles.

Union Castle Line,
S.S. Guelph.

We have been on the move most of the time since I last wrote to you. At Bulawayo we went out and saw Rhodes' grave on the Matoppas, and I played tennis. At Salisbury I saw John Hopley and Mr. Montague, Aunt Ruby's uncle, who was very decent to us. We went from Salisbury to Beira, on the coast, passing through Portuguese West Africa, which is very tropical. It rained the whole way, the water coming down in walls, and the temperature quite high; it was like a hot-house when they have been watering the flowers; the flowers were splotches of colour, orchids and many others, and there were parrots sitting on the telegraph wires and blue jays. At about 6.30 in the morning we stopped, whilst some black men under a Portugee laded up some trucks with young bamboos; they smelt very nice in the rain. At Beira we got on to the boat in pouring rain, carried on the backs of niggers through the mud. We stopped at Chinde, where the Zambesi flows into the sea, and at Mozambique, where I bought some coral.

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On the journey from Beira to Zanzibar, which was made by boat, uncle and nephew decided that for a joke they would pretend to be strangers. This stratagem was a great success, and lightened the rather long and tedious week that it took to make the voyage. The boat was bad, an old English one, a new German line having just been started which had cut out the other services. The weather was fearfully hot, and the passengers on board, who were divided between nice Rhodesian colonists and rather stiff and snobbish South African people, had nothing to do but survey the other travellers and gossip about each other, George and his uncle being finally both put down as "unplaceable" by their companions.

About February 20th the boat arrived at 12 o'clock on one beautiful star-lit night in the harbour of Zanzibar.

Eustace Strong, when head of his house at Harrow, had had under his care the then Sultan of Zanzibar, and therefore had known him very well. Eustace persisted in landing alone in the P.O. boat in order that he might say that he had slept one night in Zanzibar. When George joined him on the following morning, he found that his uncle had been to the Consulate, and had had a message sent to the Palace to say he was there.

In due course an invitation to lunch arrived. With fear and curiosity the young men entered the Palace, where armed sentries guarded the doors and barbaric and oriental splendour mingled with European comforts. Picturesquely-dressed retainers, amongst whom were some Arabs with long white beards, stood about everywhere. Passing up the staircase, richly decorated with gold, they were met half way up by an Englishman in a resplendent white uniform covered with gold lace,

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who introduced himself to them as Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, A.D.C. and secretary to the Sultan.[1]

This was the beginning of a long and warm friendship.

They were presented to the Sultan, who greeted Eustace as "Dear old Lusty" (his nick-name at Harrow), and enquired affectionately after old school friends. There was an enormous lunch, to which they did full justice, whilst the band played oriental music. They sat on a huge verandah looking over the beautiful bay of Zanzibar, with the wonderful smell, which all travellers there will remember.

Lunch was followed by billiards and a mild gambling game with dice, which George and the Sultan played together, when they behaved like two schoolboys. The blowing of the steamer's siren startled the little party, and after many efforts on his uncle's part to get George away, the state barge was ordered out to take them to the ship. Lavish presents were showered upon them, amongst which was a large camera, and with Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett in charge of the barge, they started for the boat. When they were half way out the ship pulled up her anchor and steamed away, in spite of vigorous wavings!

Afterwards they heard that the ship's passengers saw the whole incident, realised that George and Eustace were really friends, and had upbraided the Captain for having left them thus in the lurch—minus all their luggage and with no other boat for four days!

The Sultan received them back with kindness, and entertained them as his guests in rooms taken for them in the town; clothes were supplied by Mr. Ashmead-

[1] Captain F. G. C. Ashmead-Bartlett killed in action whilst leading his company, November 14, 1916.

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Bartlett and a local Indian tailor, who made them ten-shilling suits of white duck in a few hours.

Their rooms had endless windows looking out on palms and white sands and blue sea, the bay studded with green islands under a perfect sky.

They were introduced to the local society, and were invited to a tea and dance the first evening.

The next day Eustace saw some of the good missionary work done by Bishop Weston, of Kikuyo and the Universities' Mission fame, and was specially interested in the Altar in the Cathedral, which had been erected on the site of the old whipping-post for slaves.

He and George went duck shooting on the islets in the bay, sailing in the native boats. Golf and picnics gave them an interesting idea of the mixture of European and Oriental life in the Tropics, and games of billiards, meals and entertainments at the Palace filled up the rest of their time. Although they heard the women of the harem in the distance, they never saw one. The Sultan had recently taken to himself a new wife of fifteen, which had for some reason incensed the local community, and they saw the bride's father, who seemed rather proud of his notoriety.

On the last day they nearly missed the steamer again, and only scrambled on board as she was moving. It was a French ship, and in twenty-four hours they landed at Mombasa.

Then came Nairobi and Uganda, which George wished to visit for the sake of his father's interest in the missionary work there.

En route to Nairobi they saw one of the most beautiful sights of their whole tour. In the early morning, soon after the train had left Mombasa, there suddenly appeared the snow-covered masses of the top of Kilima-

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njaro, bathed in the light of the rising sun, the base of the mountain being completely hidden by the mists below.

Their excitement grew hourly as the zoological aspect of the country unfolded itself, herds of game feeding near the line, birds of all sorts, and monkeys playing in the trees.

At Nairobi they drove fifty or sixty miles to Mr. Hausberg's farm in a huge motor char-à-banc, doing the last ten miles on ponies and mules.

They spent three days shooting together at Punda Milia, where Mr. Rutherford and Mr. Swift, Mr. Hausberg's partners, showed them great kindness. The longed-for goal of the whole journey was reached, and the "safari" had begun.

George went up to Uganda alone, and there received a warm welcome from Archdeacon Walker, his father's friend. On the way up he had been nearly wrecked on the Victoria Nyanza; the deck cargo was all lost, and everyone feared the ship would be overturned.

In Uganda George lay out all one night in a swamp by the side of the lake, and shot a huge "hippo," the sound of his shot disturbing the whole herd, who stampeded, and the boy only saved himself by crawling under a hollow tree trunk as they swept by. The next morning he was almost unrecognisable from mosquito bites. He wrote his experiences:

C. M. S.
Namirengo.

This is an awfully nice place, and Archdeacon Walker is an awfully good sort and a very broad-minded and sensible man. His wife is very nice.

I met a Miss Watney this morning in the hospital; she is first cousin of the Pangbourne Watneys. The

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hospital up here is marvellous, and there are very good doctors.

The boys in the school sang to me this morning; they sing very well and have good voices. The schoolmaster, Mr. Hattersley, is a very sound man.

There is a Mr. Daniel, who has stayed at Hammerwood and also met you at Torquay; he went round with the cinematograph which Father gave. He is quite a good sort.

This is a very pretty country. The other night I shot a hippopotamus; unfortunately it was not full grown, so its tusks were not worth keeping. I shot two zebras a little time ago, and knocked over a large "roan antelope" at about 400 yards; unfortunately it got up again and I could not catch it up. The mosquitos are very troublesome. The other evening I got about 3 or 400 bites on my face, hands and arms, and even on my back through my thick coat. I hope they won't give me fever; though it is not very bad, people out here seem to have it regularly about once or twice a month. Bishop Tucker is in Egypt now. I met Hugh Savile in Mombasa; I was going to stay with him at Kisumu, but I have not heard from him. The people here who know Father's name are very keen on him. . . . I want to see Hammerwood again awfully. I can't imagine living anywhere else. There are very beautiful places in the world, but you can't beat England!

From Uganda George returned to Nairobi, and wrote:

Norfolk Hotel,
Nairobi, B.E.A.

I am back at Nairobi, having enjoyed Uganda very much. It is a very pretty country. I am going out

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"on Safari" to-morrow; it will be nice camping out every night, and it ought to be a very healthy life. Two fellows are going out 50 miles in a motor in the direction I want to go, which will save me a lot of exertion, as I was going to bicycle there. Pretty energetic, don't you think? and the will is as good as the deed! Mr. Swift and Mr. Rutherford are awfully nice. I never knew before that Mr. Swift was a son of the old Mr. Swift on Holtye Common, with whom I used to go and play billiards when I first came to Hammerwood. I hope the south of France has done you good.

George's travels extended in a half-circle northwards, and after crossing the Aberdare River he returned to Nairobi to meet Eustace Strong, who had in the meantime been staying first with the Master of Hounds at Nairobi, and then with Mr. Elkington, Mr. Hugh Savile and Archdeacon (now Bishop) Willis at their combined establishment on the shores of the Victoria Nyanza, finally ending up with a small "Safari" of his own on the slopes of "Dongo Sabak."

On his return from Uganda to Punda Milia, George was greeted with the news that his uncle had shot two lions.

From Nairobi his uncle wrote:

Nairobi,
April 2nd, 1911.

George has brightened up very much since we have been here. He has now gone alone on safari. He is very keen on the shooting, and has taken much trouble over it. I think it is a good thing, and will be an interest to him on his return home.

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It must be remembered that at this time George was only twenty and young for his age, and that his uncle was rather doubtful as to the wisdom of letting him go alone, with sixty natives under him, into practically a savage country on an expedition which would probably last for six weeks. The boy wished, however, to enjoy the absolute solitude, and overcame his uncle's fears, which proved to be groundless, as he brought back the men in far better discipline than when they set out. Some of them Eustace had taken with him before, and he found that he had been too soft-hearted with them owing to his religious scruples, and as a result, when George took them over, they were rather out-of-hand. Amongst other things, the gun-bearer had strongly objected to making Sunday a day of rest! George settled the question by forgetting all about the days of the week until a pagazi announced that it was Good Friday, when he gave them all a holiday.

The time had now come when the two travellers had to prepare for their homeward journey. George was very anxious to stay longer, but his mother felt that he ought to return to Cambridge without further delay now that he was so much stronger, and George and his uncle booked their passages on the German ship "Adolf Woermann." When they went on board at Mombasa they found the Sultan of Zanzibar and Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett on their way to England for King George's Coronation festivities.

There was an interesting company of passengers, including Mr. Macmillan, a well-known and kind-hearted American, Count Von Plessen, a rich German diplomat, who had a shooting in English territory and who could never get over his astonishment that E. M. S., "a pastor," had really shot a lion! There was Captain

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Kincaid Smith, M.P., and a well-known Swede travelling on behalf of the King of Sweden, and amongst all these older men there was the boy George, who was treated in the kindest manner.

There was a certain amount of gambling on board, which was, of course, winked at by the authorities, and the guardian uncle had to exercise some little control. He was asked as an "honest man" to score for the party occasionally!! On the other hand, when at Port Said he was asked to hold a service as it was Sunday. This he did, and said it was one of the strangest experiences of his life (he was only twenty-eight himself). The Mohammedans were listening through the port-hole windows of the saloon, whilst his immediate congregation consisted of noted financiers and men of the world, who joined in singing the hymns and listening to his words. The ordeal was enough to make any young man nervous. True to his traditions, George took the collection, which was for the widows and orphans of the officers of the ship.

George was a general favourite with all his fellow-passengers—a fact which was exemplified by the speechifying, when "Ladies and gentlemen and Mr. Whidborne" was the constant way of beginning! At the farewell dinner he made a speech himself, ending up by regretting that the charming Mr. Macmillan did not possess a daughter!

On the return journey at Aden a pure-bred Somali, with dull red hair and copper-coloured skin, came on board as "boy" to a vendor of ostrich feathers. He was dressed in a long white surplice-like garment, and as he had a very winning manner, George took a great fancy to him and insisted on bringing him back to England as his servant. When at Naples Abdi-Lihu,

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for that was his name, knocked down an Italian boy who had laughed at him, and would have strangled him if he had not been pulled off! At Marseilles, where the travellers got off the boat, a crowd of fifty to a hundred people followed him to the doors of the hotel, and the consternation of the household at Hammerwood when George produced this "white elephant" is better imagined than described.

Abdi remained in England for a year, waiting behind his master's chair at home and at Cambridge supplying his needs as a servant. As, however, life in England did not improve him, Mrs. Whidborne sent him back to his own country, from which at intervals weirdly spelt letters have arrived ever since.

The addresses on these letters were veritable curiosities. M.Wood! And on the letter "Ember Wood," and then "East" on one line and "Green Street" on the next, and finally the delightfully spelt word "Sacicks"!

No wonder George wrote after he had received the first:

"I enclose a letter from Abdy. I love the address, don't you? It was very clever of the Post Office to find me I think."

As Abdi never received the letters sent to him, it is rather wonderful that he still continues to write; but he does, and in one of his last productions, which it is supposed that he gets professional writers to inscribe for him, as he could not write himself, he says that he is on an English ship and "hopes to kill some Germans."

As a thank-offering for his safe return, George and his mother sent a communion service to the church at Mukino, and received the following letter:

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C.M.S. Mukino
Oct. 19th, 1911.

DEAR MR. WHIDBORNE,

We got safely back here last night week, and your very kind present has greatly pleased our native clergy, who have written you the enclosed letter to thank you. The vessels and boxes which contain them have been beautifully made by a firm in Birmingham, and are admirably suited for our purpose.

I have translated the letter, preserving the native idiom as far as possible.

With our kindest regards,

I am,
Yours very sincerely,
G. W. BASKERVILLE.

Translation.

Mukino.

To the friend who loves us very much.

We greet you very warmly and we rejoice over you greatly because you have remembered us in this way and had pity upon us of your grace (kindness) in sending us Church cups (vessels) for our interesting work. We rejoice over you when we hear that you too rejoice over us, we who belong to Kyagwe and Bugere (the two counties of my district). You had great pity upon us and helped us exceedingly by giving us these very costly presents. Thank you very much for giving us these vessels in their small boxes which are so light that they can be carried without trouble.

We are also very glad at the return of our head together with the ladies (my wife and her sister) and

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may God be greatly thanked for bringing them safely back to us.

Goodbye. We are those that love you.

(Signed) JONATHAN KAIJI.
ELIJAH MUKASA.
JOEL LUGANDA.
HENRY NAKUMANYANGA.
THEOPHILUS BAUMTENDA.

This chapter may well conclude with the following diary, kept by George on his travels:

DIARY "ON SAFARI."

March 27th, 1911.

When E. came back he said he had shot at a lion at 50 yards, and seen the bullet hit the earth on the other side. Soon after he saw the "cow," he bowled her head over heels like a rabbit, but she got into some long grass. He walked in a little way, but, hearing her growl, came back as it was dusk; he was much annoyed.

March 28th.

Next morning we both went out with three gun-bearers and ten beaters, most of whom were very much frightened at first, and drove up the gully where the lioness had disappeared. I was walking through the long grass when it moved about ten yards ahead and I heard her growl. I took several steps backward up the hill so that I could see down, and just saw the beast disappear behind a bush. I would not have gone back to that long grass for any money, but the boys threw stones into it and shouted and eventually walked through, but the lioness had moved further up. We walked up the gully, one gun on each side, as when shooting a "shaw" in England.

We went up once and down again and up again half way, when they found the lioness had branched up my side, 5 yards from the dead body of the lion E. thought he had missed the day before.

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March 29th.

Walked to Fort Hall, about 5 hours' walk; very hot. Saw Provincial Commissioner Mr. M'Clelland, who gave me a drink and some lunch. The Chief came up and shook hands; he is coming to-morrow to have his photograph taken.

March 30th.

Kept at Fort Hall, owing to having no money. Two very nice Englishmen, soldiers from India, camped near me. They knew Jamie. Their names are Hart and Sloper. Had a touch of fever.

March 31st.

Started at nine after saying goodbye to H. and S. Walked with Gondo, a chief, who is going to shew me buffalo. His brother came, too. Our camp was about 300 yards from a small stream. We saw herds of zebra, a few pigs, and some ostriches. This evening we have seen two or three rhinos, one about the size of a semi-detached villa, and a very big wart-hog. One rhino started off at what looked liked a fast walk; we found he had gone quite an inch in a few minutes.

I was not allowed to shoot at any of these animals, as we were expecting to get the buffalos when they came to feed.

There was a row between Bow and Alli about the amount of mealie meal.

April 1st.

I got up at four to shoot buffalos coming in from feeding, but I did not see any. Met H. and S. At mid-day had a shot at bush-buck in a "shambuar" (cultivated plot of land). Missed him.

In the evening I went out after buffalos again. Did not see any. As it was getting dark I had a shot at kongoni for "yama." The kongoni ran off, but I found I had shot a calf which was at her side, and which I hadn't noticed in the dusk. I then remembered it was "All Fool's Day."

April 2nd.

Up at six. Gave a fellow half a rupee for some good honey. Shot a caargur and a ground squirrel. Shot an impala; fairly good head. Shot a water-buck; good head. I saw several

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PHOTOGRAPH BY E. H. STRONG

GEORGE FERRIS WHIDBORNE
ON SAFARI DECEMBER 1910

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jackals and two very big eland ; whilst stalking them I saw the head of a hyena looking at me. I thought it was a lioness at first, and so did the boys, and did not shoot. I saw a rhino with a fairly good horn, walked up to it and let off at 30 yards a soft-nosed bullet, which flattened out, and the rhino ran off.

I came into the camp at 12 o'clock very hot, and had a ripping bathe in the stream, as they said there were no "numba," but I felt rather nervous. Had lunch. *N.B.*— Yesterday I killed a snake. This morning I saw two marabout storks. I messed about in the evening, and watched the heads being killed. I sent 4 boys back to Fort Hall for "potio." These are some words of their language :

Chafu, - - - -	dirty.
Safi, - - - -	clean.
Masuri, - - -	good.
Muto, - - - -	pillow or river.
Mutee, - - - -	tree.
Moto, - - - -	fire or hot.
N'doka way, - - -	stand up sharp.
N'deo harpar, - -	come here.

April 3rd, Sunday.

I told Simba not to wake me till I woke, but he awoke me at 7.30 to say there was a big water-buck just outside the tent. I shot it. It was a bigger head than yesterday, but the horns not so long. There was a row between Gondo and three boys. He said that they had broken down a box of honey from a tree and done three rupees' worth of damage. It was the boys' first safari, so we let them off with a cursing till next time, and I gave Gondo 2 rupees. I ate the honey, which was very good. I went out in the evening to get "yama" ; saw three or four eland, but could not get a shot. I shot 3 caargur with one shot, and a dove.

April 4th.

Up at six. Away by 7 to a place where Gondo swore there were buffalo. No shooting. Very much bored. Rotten camping ground. Saw remains of a buffalo which Gondo said he had shot last month. Como still has fever. Bough has

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rheumatism, and several others have minor ailments, cuts, etc. A boy has had to go back to Fort Hall for cartridges.

April 5th.

Up at 6. After about an hour's march I shot a duiker with small horns. Later I saw some pigs and went after them. On the way I saw two hyenas, and shot one dead. I went after the other, but the boys called me back, as they had spotted a third in a hole. I shot that one. Whilst the boys were skinning I went back with Gondo's brother or son, and whilst we were nosing about in a regular warren of holes he came across a freshly dead lioness which he thought I had killed. It was lying at the entrance of a hole; it had evidently been sickly, and the hyenas had taken about one bite from it. It was very small and thin. I have in the last ten days seen three lions, two dead and one wounded. I wish I could see a live one. Shot a jackal and corzoni for meat. In the afternoon we cleaned skins and pegged them out. Simba has just brought in some very nice looking meat, and put it down like a family butler, saying, "Roast tiger." An awful idea flashed across me that Selee had roasted me either jackal or hyena. But Simba meant "Duicker." Selee feeds me very well. I have "impala soup" and "minced caargur," as well as the hearts and livers of most of the things I kill.

April 6th.

It was pouring with rain this morning, and we could not get out till 10. I saw three pigs, one very big, but missed him. I crossed a very deep river, up to the waists of the porters. Simba says Captain and Mrs. Blaking camped in this place. Ra Yabo has taught me a lot more words.

In the evening I saw a large herd of doe impala, with a good head leading them. While stalking them I came on a herd of 15 or so male impala, with two very good ones. I also saw some eland. I went after them, and came across about 150 to 200 buffalo. We crept up to within 75 yards. Bough pointed out a knot of three; I fired at the biggest and killed it. It was a cow! I had not realised that the bulls were smaller than the cows. It got dark and I did not get any more,

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though I had a shot at one. I spent a miserable evening till I decided to own the corpse!

April 7th.

I went out this morning to where I shot at the buffalo the last time, and I am bothered if there was not a very big bull lying dead 50 yards from where I had shot at them. And Gondo had sworn that not one was hit. Anyway the hyenas had been at it in the night and luckily had not touched the face, though they had taken some out of the neck. I hope it will not be spoiled for setting up. I shot an impala, not very big, and saw a big monkey, which I missed at about 350 yards. I also saw 6 cow eland.

April 8th.

I left at 7 for Mero. I saw buffalo and a wild cat, and shot a caargur. We came to a river which was very hard to cross. Right up to our shoulders and we were nearly carried away. I had lunch with Kenyon-Slaney, D.C., and reported about the cow buffalo to him.

April 9th.

Very rainy day.

April 10th.

I started at 8 and camped at ½ past 1. On the way I ate some sugar-cane. There was no shooting. All native shamburs like Uganda. It is 75 miles from Embu to Mero, and we have come nearly 40. There is a big Kikuyu chief here; and I went to see a dance, which was more interesting than edifying, but anyway the pagazis liked it.

April 11th.

We started early. The road was the same all the way, never straight or flat for 100 yards, and very hilly in some places. We camped in a ripping grove of enormous trees, and it was jolly in the evening sitting outside the tent. The tall trees stood out against a moonlit sky, with broken clouds in it, and halfway up floated the smoke from the fire below, and there were lots of fire-flies.

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April 12th.

We started at 7, and walked with only a stop of half-an-hour for lunch till about 4 o'clock. The pagazis came to me in the evening and complained it was too far. As it was the recognized journey for that day I spoke to them and they melted away.

April 13th.

Up at 4, and I walked till about 3 in the afternoon, when I was glad to see Mero. Mero is a very well laid-out "boma." The three English houses are made of logs, as Horne, the man who came on a bit of bush and made Mero, had been in Canada. There was only one man here named Butler—very nice. He was at Trin. Hall. I had dinner with him, and he told me that there had been a man-eating lion a little while ago. It took three men and a woman; it has not been killed yet, but has gone back to the forest.

April 14th.

Butler tells me that the Indian in the office declares that it is Good Friday . . . on the strength of which I agree to give my pagazis a rest and stay the day with him.

He had to go out and inspect a road one of the chiefs is building. The old men and boys and, in urgent cases, the women make the roads and the gutters.

The young men are awful nuts, and are used to make bridges, etc. We found that they were absolutely "biffed" by a bridge, about two hours out from here, so Butler, who is a regular jack-of-all-trades, set about repairing it, and we finished it very nicely. I had tea and dinner with Butler, and read poetry in the evening, especially poetry bearing on England.

April 15th.

I said good-bye to B., and walked for about six hours. We camped amidst trees—very pretty—and saw a lot of storks.

April 16th.

Easter Sunday. As the "pagazis" had a whole holiday on Good Friday and my time was limited, I did about seven hours' trek. I shot a running duiker in fine form in the morning,

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but after that my luck deserted me, and I missed both oryx (gazelle), grants and caargur. I told some natives to run after a young oryx, which had lost its mamma, but they were afraid, as they thought it was a lion. In the evening I shot a grant. It was rather a good one.

April 17th.

I had a splendid day with partridges. I got three brace, and missed a zebra and canzoni. Shot two oryx, both rather good. The first oryx was not dead, although she had four shots in her, including one which entered at the base of the horn. I also saw three hares.

April 18th.

I shot a partridge and gems-buck and grant. The skin of the last was full of beetle-bugs, so we did not eat its meat. Camping near Guasa Nird River, I watched an oryx and giraffe quite close through glasses. I saw two oryx fighting, and heard two jackals. In the evening Ra Yabo told me a lion was roaring after its prey. I listened and heard it.

April 19th.

In the morning Ra Yabo told me they had heard two lions, quite close to the camp, and when I started out there was the spoor of a big lion not 30 yards away. I walked for about 5 hours and saw a giraffe, then had lunch and walked again for 4 or 5 hours and saw a herd of 40 or 50 giraffes, also some eland, but could not get a shot in. I got back to camp about 6 very tired, having been out about 11 hours, and very much disgusted at having shot nothing. I heard the lion.

April 20th.

I started about 7, and shot an impala, also my last grant; it was not very big, I am afraid. It was very hot, not a cloud in the sky.

April 21st.

Walked for 5 or 6 hours, and shot a Punda Milia (zebra). We camped near the place where we saw the lion's spoor the other day, and on the way here crossed fresh lions' footprints. In the evening we went about half-an-hour away from the

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camp, and came on the spoor of three lions, only three hours old; we followed it. I smelt the lion house at the Zoo, and I thought now we have them, but I only got a porcupine. I am going to stalk a zebra to-morrow. I shot a partridge.

April 22nd.

I am not feeling very well, and think I have a slight touch of fever. I did not go out till evening, when I shot a zebra and a small hyena, which came to life again on the pagazi's back. He gave a scream, and said it hung on to his back like a baby. The last two nights I have slept outside the tent, and slept a bit better, but last night I could not sleep and lions got on my brain. I have remembered all the lion stories I had ever heard, and, as one of their regular night drinking places was only 30 yards away, I at last called the guard and said it was so windy I would sleep inside the tent. I shall take some quinine to-night, I have only taken 10 grains since I started. By the way, coming back to-night after the sun had gone down, suddenly Choka stopped—there was a yellowish object crouching about 30 yards away. In a moment it sprang up and bounded away. Everyone aimed at it thinking it was a lion, but it was only a mtolo seroa.

April 23rd.

We started at 5.30. While I was shooting at a jerenuk I suddenly heard a shout, and turning round I saw two rhinos rushing off. I only had my small gun and one cartridge in it so I thought I would let them off. They had passed within a few yards of Choka and less than 40 yards behind me. Simba then told me afterwards he looked vainly for a tree, but found them all two small and prickly. Although I wounded the jerenuk, unfortunately, though we followed its trail for nearly an hour, I did not get it; and so I have passed from the land of caanjan and jerenuk without getting either—rather silly! I have had rather much fever, and have taken 5 grains more of quinine.

April 24th.

We started at 6 and crawled into the camping ground about 2 o'clock. I went to bed early with two blankets below me,

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three above me, and my greatcoat on top of all. On the way to-day I shot a really good impala—my last stop.

April 25th.

The quinine I took seemed to buck me up, and I started out in fine form this morning, but after 5 hours I felt bad again. I went on, however, till past two. It is raining to-day instead of the blazing weather of last week. Last night a record number of porters were "sick." By the way, I think I must go in for medicine. One of the men had toothache and there was nothing to take his tooth out with, and the string we tried it with broke. So I gave him some mustard to put on as a counter-irritant. Next morning the swelling had gone down, the pain was gone, and he thinks it is all due to me.

After sitting in my tent for a bit, Camoa came and said they had found an elephant or something. I went with them, and sure enough they had unearthed one tusk of a very large elephant. The tusk is about 9 feet. Bough says probably the Masai killed an elephant for food about 6 years ago. One of them buried his tusks, went to his hut and died. He meant to go back in a couple of years, dig it up, and get something for it from the Government.

April 26th.

Poured with rain in the morning. Did not get away till 9.30. Saw a budh buck, but it was very misty, and I missed it.

Had lunch while pagazis were cutting up a zebra I had shot. Pagazis said they had gone too far, but they did not come and tell me so this time.

April 27th.

Up at 5.30, as a long day was ahead. After 1½ hours suddenly came on the first spoors of a rhino and two lions. Naturally we followed the lion, which we did for nearly a mile, but lost it in some grass. We searched for it for nearly half-an-hour, and eventually the cook's boy picked it up. All the pagazis got on to it, and we followed it for some time, but at last lost it for good. In the evening I went out and shot a punda milia, about half-an-hour away from camp, to leave as bait for the lions.

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April 28th.

Sa hume! Two o'clock. I don't want to shoot a lion; I want to go to sleep again.

In spite of my sleepiness, I was ready to start in half-an-hour, after having drunk a cup of tea. First we had to cross a river in the dark. It was very cold, and the dew was on the grass. Fine gold thread in the east, like the thread of my life—easily snapped. That's better, its growing thicker. Supposing there are three lions! I have only one gun and my shot gun, having run out of cartridges for the 256, and I am not sure of my shooting with this gun. Think how it will hurt if they turn and rend me! At last we get to the spot. I am awfully excited as to what will be there—I peep from behind the bush. There is a dark figure crouched down by the remains of the zebra. I stand up and a large hyena runs away. If lions had come they would have dragged the meat out of the open under a bush. We returned to camp and breakfast and started again at 5.30. I saw large flocks of musai sheep. We encamped again at 2 o'clock.

April 29th.

When I got here, on going to see the D.C., I received the astounding news that I am expected to catch the boat on the 5th. I am 5 good days from Nairobi, missing out Punda Milia. Mr. D. C. makes the brilliant suggestion that I should go to Naivasha (two days) and chance catching a train. I may just do it. I sold Alidina Visram a few remaining stores. He gave me 16 rupees for them. Went to dinner with D. C.

April 30th.

I started off by 8 with a dozen of the pagazis. The D.C. lent me a mule. We climbed all day through bamboo forest, where I believe elephants hang out. The flowers were good; I saw lots of violets. The vegetation simply grew on top of each other. At 5 we camped in Scotland, having left tropical Africa behind! Last night was bitterly cold, in spite of my 5 blankets and greatcoat. I woke up freezing, being wet with a cold dew on my face and hair.

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May 1st.

I have just had breakfast, the sun is out and I feel better. Here ends the diary.

These few lines are to be found in the pocket-book which contained his journal :

This is the land of promise,
  Old England's latest bud,
Where the untouched leaves have fallen
  On the first alluvial mud ;
And the dead tree lies in the clearing,
  Cleared by no hand of man.

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CHAPTER IV

HOME AND ABROAD

COMING OF AGE—CAMBRIDGE—MILITARY TRAINING

WHILST George was in Africa his mother and sisters had been spending the winter at Vernet in the Pyrenees. Charlie had passed into Sandhurst at Christmas, and after coming out to see his family in France, had joined Seymour, who was spending the holidays with his uncle, Theodore Chambers, at Engelburg for the winter sports, in which all the Whidbornes delighted.

Hammerwood House was re-opened in May, 1911, and George returned to Cambridge. Considerable doubt was felt as to whether he would be able to settle down there again after all his wanderings, and he evidently felt the changed conditions which the return to civilised life involved, and he wrote to Eustace Strong:

"Here I am again with my nose glued to the petty treadwheel of a don-ridden cess-pool. I hope you understand my meaning. 'Me that 'ave been what I've been, Me that 'ave gone where I've gone, me that 'ave seen what I've seen,' me that 'ave watched 'arf a world 'eave up all shining with dew (G. F. W.) valleys as big as a shire, 'I will arise an' get 'ence I will trek South and make sure if it's only my fancy or not . . . that there's something gone small with the lot,'—and I

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expect you feel it too, but I've had too exciting a time this summer to realize it yet."

With his usual high spirits he entered fully into all the excitements of Coronation year. The season was naturally a very gay one, and George took his full share in it. He attended many functions, one of which was a review in Windsor Park by the King of the Oxford and Cambridge Senior O.T.C.s, with the junior members from the Public Schools, both George and Seymour being present.

The great events of this summer, beside the Coronation, for which all the children had been brought to London for the sights under the care of Theodore Chambers, were "The Great Drought" and "The Great Strike," which were considered by some people to be allied; temper being much affected by the heat!

On June 30th a brass was unveiled to the memory of Mr. Whidborne, who had been the patron of St. John's Church, which had been erected by his uncle, Mr. James Lucas, and the Baroness Burdett Coutts on the family estates at Deptford. Theodore Chambers went with George, and wrote to his sister about the event:

"Just a line to tell you that the function this evening was very nicely done. George and I got down to the Vicarage at 6, and Mr. Jepson took us over the Parish—to the schools, the Club, and the Mission Hall. Then we dined at the Vicarage, the Bishop of Woolwich being there also. Mrs. and Basil Atkinson were dining elsewhere. The service lasted from 8 till a little after 9. It was quite nice, and the Bishop preached a very simple good sermon—and eulogised Ferris in his capacity of patron—which duty, he said, he exercised with skill and judgment. He spoke of his other innumerable good works for the parish and in the other places, and he had

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a nice word or two to address to George and Basil Atkinson, who had unveiled the Brasses. George was very glad to have been there."

In the autumn George went to Scotland for the Highland games at Inverness, where he went to two "ripping balls" and enjoyed some good shooting. He returned home at the end of September in order to keep his twenty-first birthday.

The following account of the festivities, taken from the local newspapers, gives an interesting history of the formation of the Hammerwood estate:

COMING OF AGE FESTIVITIES AT HAMMERWOOD.

During the past week there have been very pleasant festivities at Hammerwood, near East Grinstead, in celebration of the coming of age of Mr. George Whidborne, eldest son of the late Rev. G. F. Whidborne and Mrs. Whidborne, and all sections of local residents have had an opportunity of joining in the proceedings. On Saturday tea was provided for all the women and children on the estate, and some 200 partook of a bountiful meal. Later on there were fireworks and illuminations. The terrace was very effectively bedecked with fairy lamps by Mr Whitlock, the head gardener, while the display of lights in the park was also very good, and the fireworks on the lake were a source of great delight. There was a supper party at the mansion the same evening, when about 60 personal friends of the family were entertained.

On Monday a dinner was given to the tenants and employés of the Hammerwood Estate, when a party of 70 sat down. Mr. Theodore G. Chambers (Mrs. Whidborne's brother) took the chair, and there were also present Mr. Strong, sen., the Rev. Rupert Strong (vicar of Hammerwood), Mr. Gardner (agent for the Hammerwood Estate), Mr. P. E. Wallis (East Grinstead), Mr. George Whidborne, and Mr. Seymour Whidborne. The tenants included Messrs. Raw, Dadswell, Baldwin, Hunt, Post, Brown (2), Pilkington (2), Carey (2), and

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Anscombe, while among the employés were Messrs. Whitlock, Few, Parker, Edwards, etc.

Mr. Chambers proposed the toast of the evening—"The Health of Mr. George Whidborne." He referred to the occasion as being significant of the old spirit of landlord and tenant that was gradually being lost by reason of properties having to be given up owing to heavy death duties and Government taxation. He explained the difficulties of continuing the same employment on the estates when incomes were reduced by 10 per cent. He also referred to the increasing purchases by County Councils and the disadvantages of Council tenancies as compared with tenancies under reasonable, kindly and considerate landlords. The late Mr. Whidborne he described as the ideal landlord, invariably kind and generous in his dealings (applause). He emphasised the advantages of this attribute in business relations.

Mr. Dadswell supported the toast, and said that he quite agreed as to the disadvantage of County Council tenancies, and also as to the difficulties that beset the farmer, who had to lock up his capital in purchase. He pointed out that his own rent could not amount to one per cent. on the expenditure that the landlord had made on the farm from time to time. He hoped Mr. George Whidborne would take up farming, not that he could tell him he would make money, because he wouldn't, but so that he might have practical knowledge of the difficulties and risks that beset agriculture (cheers).

Mr. Baldwin also supported the toast, and referred in eulogistic terms to the kindness which the late Mr. Whidborne showed to his tenants, and his self-sacrifice and generosity.

Mr. Whidborne's health was drunk with musical honours.

Mr. Gardner, on behalf of the tenants and employés, then presented Mr. Whidborne with a pair of very handsome candlesticks. He said that his work as an agent was rendered very easy by his having a client like Mrs. Whidborne, whose main interest was that all her people should be well and fairly dealt with. He considered both landlord and tenants on the Hammerwood Estate combined to lighten his labours by their mutual goodwill (applause).

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Mr. George Whidborne replied, and thanked everyone for their share in the gift they had made him. He trusted that the day might come when he should be presiding over a similar gathering on the coming of age of his own son, and he trusted all the faces he saw round him would be there again. He hoped soon to have more time to spend on the property, so that he might get to know them individually and intimately (hear, hear).

Mr. Chambers then surrendered the chair to Mr. George Whidborne.

The Vicar (Mr. Rupert Strong) proposed Mrs. Whidborne's health, and Mr. Seymour Whidborne replied on her behalf.

The speeches were interspersed with an excellent entertainment given by Mr. Sydney Gandy. His ventriloquial entertainment was enhanced by the presence of Abdylihu, Mr. Whidborne's Somali servant, who assisted the performer with much humour.

East Grinstead Observer, Saturday, October 7, 1911.

A very happy event has been celebrated during the past week on the extensive and picturesque estate of Hammerwood, which lies on the borders of Holtye Common and stretches almost to the town of East Grinstead. Mr. George Whidborne, the eldest son of the present owner, has just come of age, and the important event has been marked by fitting festivities. The young gentleman is heir to an extensive Sussex property. Hammerwood, so named from the hammer used at the furnace for smelting iron ore, which used to exist on the estate, was formerly known as The Bower, and was a reputed manor, though there are no manorial rights attaching to it now. Indeed, portions of it were at one time subject to other manors, and three several quit rents were payable to the Lord of the Manor of Sheffield-Grinstead and one to the Lord of the Manor of Broadhurst, both of which manors were heritable on death.

It was for many years in the possession of the old East Grinstead family of Payne, but in 1693 John Payne disposed of The Bower Manor Farm, of about 500 acres, to Alexander Luxford, one of the 33 burgage holders of East Grinstead, the

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only people who had a Parliamentary vote for the old borough. Almost immediately after the nucleus of the present mansion was erected, superfluous trees were removed and lawns and park were created. Some 40 years later the property had got into the possession of the Rev. John Smith, rector of Withyham, and he left it to his son of the same name, who was an Assistant Warden of Sackville College. This John Smith and his wife Mary died without issue, whereupon the manor and premises descended to a Miss Elizabeth Baker, a daughter of the only sister of John Smith the younger. In 1786 it was sold by order of the Court of Chancery, but was then described as a mansion and estate of under 200 acres, and nothing was said as to its being a manor. The purchaser was Mr. Geo. Brooks, steward to Viscount Hampden.

During more recent times the estate has been possessed by Mr. Dorrien Magens and Mr. Oswald Smith, well-known London bankers, and both these gentlemen considerably extended its borders. As far back as 1711 it was one of the largest individual properties in the parish, for by the terrier then in force it was liable for the upkeep of 30 feet of the churchyard wall and the stile, 35 in all, and no other estate was responsible for more than 20 feet. It was Mr. Oswald Smith who added Surries Farm to the property. This had been left by Robert Payne, of Newich, in 1708, to found a free grammar school in East Grinstead. Mr. Smith gave about £4000 for the farm and the sum is now represented by £3,937. 12. 11. in India 3 per cent stock, and provides for what is known to-day as the Payne Endowment Scholarships.

As Mrs. Whidborne was too ill to be present at the coming-of-age festivities, her sister-in-law, Miss Constance Whidborne, wrote to her, giving her an account of George's speech, which was remembered by many friends afterwards, as he spoke in his usual happy way, which it is not possible to reproduce on paper:

"George looked so nice. He made great play with his long Churchwarden (I was dreadfully afraid he would

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forget what he was doing and smoke all his voice away, but he was all right). I wish you could have heard the storm of clapping. His speech was something like this:

"'Gentlemen, I really don't quite know what to say—I do think it is most awfully kind of you to give me these splendid candlesticks. . . .' Then he said a few words very nicely and quietly about 'my Father and Mother'—then, 'I hope I shall be able to take up farming as Mr. Dadswell says, I expect I shall be most awfully keen about it. Of course I don't know much about it yet, and if I heard about the bullocks eating acorns and being found dead I am afraid I should have said "Poor bullocks" instead of "Poor farmers" (laughter), but I hope I shall learn. Of course I can't be down here very much yet, I am not very old—I suppose I am still at school . . . and I have to go back to Cambridge almost at once. I don't want to go and I haven't packed yet . . . but then I never do pack till the train is gone. (Laughter.) But I hope later to be here a good deal more, and I hope you will like me when you come to know me better (applause), and some day perhaps I shall have a boy of my own, and he will be coming of age here. I hope you will all be here then—rather balder and greyer perhaps than you are now, but still I hope you will be here, and then I shall show him these beautiful candlesticks and I shall say "Look here, this is what they did for me when *I* was twenty-one!"'

"These are, of course, not the words he used, only something like it; it was so frank and boyish and unlike a mugged-up speech. And he looked such a dear fellow with one shoulder up like Ferris; it may be a bad habit, but I can't feel very sorry for it.

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"Seymour's little speech[1] was as different as the two boys themselves, very quiet and to the point, quite as good in a totally different way, and he too looked as good and charming as possible, and was very much appreciated. There was a great rattle of cups when he first began, till they knew he was speaking, and he waited a minute and then went on quite composedly. I thought it showed great self-command in so young a speaker."

George was always very anxious to do his duty to the people on the estate, going to church regularly, when at home, although this was not always his habit, because he thought it set a good example. The same feeling actuated him when abroad, where he always made a point of attending the English Church, thinking that by so doing he testified to his principles and to those of the National Church of England, to which he belonged.

At Cambridge men were ever trying to get him to take a definitely religious stand, but he had a rooted objection to making any profession of faith, because he hated humbug and hypocrisy and feared that were he to do so he would not be able to keep up to the standard which he had set himself. When one sees the things that are done in the name of God all the world over, it is not to be wondered at that men should so often have this feeling. How consoling are the words of our Lord when one feels in despair about this question, "Not everyone that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven."

It had now become necessary to settle definitely what profession George was to adopt.

[1] Charlie had not been able to leave Sandhurst, and so it fell to Seymour to make a speech.

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When Charlie had decided that he wished to enter the army, his elder brother had been anxious to do the same, but their father had wished him to go to the University, as he thought that his talents were more fitted for peaceful pursuits, besides which he wished to have his help as he grew older. His parents had hoped that he might have been able to enter the Diplomatic Service, but he had now lost so much time that this had became impossible. He was still very anxious to enter the army, and his mother decided to let him have his desire, as the only ambition that she had for her sons was that they should use their talents to the best advantage and be of some use in the world. His uncle, Theodore Chambers, and Derrick Gunston were always trying to interest George in politics, and it was hoped that at some later date a parliamentary career would attract him. That this possibility was in a fair way to be accomplished when he was called away is shown in the following letter, written after his death by his friend, Geoffrey Bing, who had known him intimately ever since his St. Andrews days:

Nov. 1st, 1915.

He was always, even in his youthful naughtiness at St. Andrews, such a "gentleman," and it was this characteristic that won him so many friends. Always too from the first I felt that George would make his mark in the world. Long ago you told me once, when I first knew you, that you would like George to be a missionary or to enter Parliament. When I saw him last holidays he told me that he had thoughts of entering Parliament after the war, and it struck me then that you would be so much pleased, and that George would perhaps find his life's work there.

Now his life's work is over, but the influence of his

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death lives on. . . . He has given all, and the world must be the better for the life of such a man so nobly laid down.

His cousin, Lord Sheffield, and Colonel Sir Herbert Perrott kindly interested themselves in his welfare, and as he wanted to enter either the Coldstream or Grenadier Guards, but preferably the former regiment, his name was put down for both.[1]

The history of the Coldstream Guards appealed to him very much, and he was much attracted to the men of that regiment whom he had met, and it was with evident pleasure that he wrote to a friend at Christmas, 1913:

"I am trying the new way of entering (the army). I went into the Special Reserve, and passed an exam. in

[1] After his death Lord Sheffield wrote:

Alderly Park,
28th October, 1915.

I was partly answerable for your son's commission, at least I added my word of recommendation.... But though you are paying a heavy price for your share in this war, it will be a comfort to feel that your son's career, though cut short, has been most gallant and full of devotion ... the son you have lost has done all that his most loving friends could hope for, his duty and his honour.

Sir Herbert Perrott also added his testimony to his respect to George's memory:

44 Queen's Gate,
Dec. 6th, 1915.

I cannot delay any longer expressing to you my very deep sympathy at the untimely death of your poor son George. I say "untimely," but it is enviable that he laid down his life for his King and Country. In my career, and especially as a C.O., I have had to do with many young men in and out of the Service, and I do not think I ever came across any young man for whom I had such a regard. It was always a pleasure to see and talk to him, and it was always a source of gratification to me that I had a little to do with his getting into the Coldstream (one of my grand-uncles was shot carrying the Coldstream Colours at Lincelles). I feel his loss a personal one and so does Ethel.

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September qualifying for it. I am now in the S.R. of the Coldstream Guards, and in December I went in for a War Office exam. to qualify for it."

George wished to enter the army for the reason that leads many men to adopt the Roman Catholic persuasion, namely, because he felt the need of more discipline than he could give himself. He said that it would make him get up in the morning, and although he was not at all fond of personal luxury, yet he realised that no other career would help him to overcome his "weaknesses" in the same way.

AUTUMN 1911.

He had received a great many letters and presents on his birthday, and was busy answering them when he returned to Cambridge.

"I am sorry I have not written before. . . . I went down to Founder's Day, where I met Derrick and Mr. Bull. I was Captain of the eleven I played in. We won 6-5, also I had to go up to London in response to a telegram from Colonel Scott-Kerr. I went into Wellington Barracks, where I was saluted ½ a dozen times, and talked to him. . . . It seems very hopeful. I had tea at Cousin Ethel's, and in the evening went down to Walworth to see Uncle Eustace with Ashmead-Bartlett. . . .

"I am taking two specials—one military subject and the other anything I liked, so I have chosen agriculture, as it might be useful and it might please the people at Hammerwood.

"I wrote to Arco, and he said he would keep an eye open for a horse. I shall want it in about 10 days."

"It is rather a bore about my horse, he is very good in every way except that I can't hold him in. He bolts

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at every excuse. I have written to Arco to try and make the man take him back. I will let you know what happens."

The horse was a birthday present to him from his family. Unfortunately he was innocent of the wiles of people who wish to sell horses, and often got taken in when buying them, and this fact was not helpful in making his allowance go a long way. This horse gave him a great deal of trouble, but there were compensations, as indirectly it taught him something about the ways of the world.

"I have been to all the lectures I ought to go to this term, which is rather good for a fortnight's term. I wrote to Crofts (an old Priory gardener), Maggie (one of the Scotch servants) and to Winnie Woodland this evening. I find it very hard to find time for all my correspondence since my birthday. I have spent rather a lot this term, but all on legitimate things.

"I had my supper last night to Hiram and Derrick and Lindsay Everard. It went off very well.

"I have taken a share in this shoot, £5. It is very good physical exercise and a pleasant way of spending the afternoon, and I think it is worth it. Thank you awfully for the horse. It is nice having it. Tell Nurse I will see about the saddle on Monday (which she was giving him.—M. W.).

"Last night we had a meeting in Fisher's Room of the Brassey Club. I was a new member, 'the hon. putter,' Derrick is the 'Hon. Brassey,' Everard is the 'mashie,' and Hiram the 'cleek,' Fisher the 'lofter.'

"The motion was that Mr. Balfour was a bad leader. I spoke for Balfour, and opened up great argument by saying that the Forces were the drag on the coach that was running away.

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"I did a lot of work this morning.

"This afternoon I tried the horse, he jumped beautifully and was a great success. I am going to call him 'Luigi' after Arco. Thank you awfully for him."

He had hoped to ride this horse in the Cottenham races, but as it proved to be unsafe, he gave up the idea. However, a friend lent him a mount, and he and Derrick Gunston rode, though George was not placed. The young men enjoyed this day immensely, often referring to it afterwards. They were photographed on horseback, and treasured the result.[1]

Life was full of interest. He writes:

New Carlton Club,
Cambridge.

Just a line to tell you that I have been elected to the Committee of the above club! Sounds well, doesn't it? Derek and a boy named Hardinge came to lunch to-day. He told us all about the Durbar, as he had been out with his father, the Viceroy. . . .

Thank you very much for your Home-Rule cutting. Unfortunately it came by the post after I went down to Cherry Hinton. Derek made an excellent speech.

[1] One of George's friends, Jack Springman, who was present, wrote in 1915:

Worlingham Camp,
Beccles, 24.11.15.

Dear Mrs. Whidborne,

I am so sorry to hear of your great loss. I knew George well, both at Harrow and Cambridge, and saw a great deal of him. Everybody who knew him liked him. He was universally popular. I found enclosed photograph the other day, and thought perhaps you would like to have it. . . .

I remember the day at Cottenham so well when this photograph was taken, and a great day it was too. . . . If you already have one I should like to have it back, as it reminds me of a very happy day.

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He really is rather good I think. There were 30 people there, counting a man who sat with his nose just peeping out of the bar. . . .

The Carlton is the University Tory Club. I went to a committee meeting last night. . . .

Christmas Day, 1911, was spent at Hammerwood quietly. Charlie and Seymour went out to Switzerland for the winter sports afterwards, and George returned to Cambridge. He wrote: "We are back in simply beastly weather, snow and slush and rather cold, but Abdy does not seem to mind it. I am continuing my agriculture this term, and am doing agricultural botany, chemistry and farm management. I went and interviewed Colonel Lambton yesterday at Wellington Barracks. There is not nearly as much chance of getting into the Coldstreams as the Grenadiers. I am to be attached to them for six weeks in the summer, which will be beastly but an experience.

"I have had a very full week. On Tuesday there was an Anti-Socialist meeting at the Guildhall. Lindsay Everard and I were introduced to Sir George Darwin, the Chairman, and Mr. Mackinder, M.P., who spoke, and we sat on the platform because he is President or something of the Carlton Club. I don't quite know why I did.

"On Thursday Mr. Lloyd George was coming down, but at the last moment he was kept back to move an amendment or something, and he sent Sir Clement Hill, M.P., K.C.M.G., etc. Derrick, Lindsay, Callaghan and I took him to the Pitt to dinner, and he spoke afterwards on Foreign affairs. I made a short speech complimenting him on the condition of Africa as I saw it. He was quite bucked, and afterwards asked me to

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go and see him in London. He said I would find his address in the Red Book.

"I am preparing a little speech on the Dutch in S. Africa and the mistaken policy of the British regarding them.

"There are dances on the 22nd and 23rd. I have asked the Bradshaws. . . ."

"I have had a very busy week. On Monday I went out with the 'Drag' in the afternoon. On Tuesday I went out with the Cavalry. We were the 'flank guard' of an advance guard of a brigade of infantry retiring on 'Cambridge,' and my section was advance guard of our troop, and I was ½ a mile in advance of the other 3 in my section; so you can imagine that if it had been a war I should have been in a pretty lonely position. As it was, I practically deserted just after I was supposed to have sighted a large body of the enemy. . . .

"Mr. Jepson wrote and asked me to open a bazaar; unfortunately it was Dec. 5th, the day of my exam, so I couldn't. I wrote him a long letter explaining and also sent a fiver, as I thought it would probably have cost me that if I had gone and I thought he would be bucked. I hope that is all right. Tell me if it was not.

"On Wednesday I was shooting about 17 miles away. We got 25 brace of driven partridges. Six guns. I got 6½ brace myself, including 3 rights and lefts.

"On Thursday I was shooting in the afternoon at our own shoot. We did very well getting 5 brace in the first 3 beats. . . . It poured with rain, and Abdy, who was beating, and I both got very wet, but we are all right now, and Abdy went to a picture-show in the evening with my land-lady's son.

"On Friday I went up to London to see Uncle

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Theodore about a horse. I am afraid I shall have to give more for one, as I can't get one anywhere for the money. I must have a safe horse, as it is not worth running any risks. I can insure the horse if I give more for it.

"On Thursday I went to dinner with Professor Hughes. He was very nice, and everyone at the Geological Schools seems to rave over the case for Father's fossils, and say it is the most wonderful one that was ever made. It is a good thing that it is a success. . . .

"On Saturday I went with a fellow I know, Freddie Hall,[1] to play rugger with some small boys. . . . Two boys named Harvey[2] came too. They live near Horsham, and it was at their house Miss Daniel took me to that dance long ago. They were at Eton and in 'Pop.' The older one has a horse up here, and goes out with the drag. He is in the Athenaeum, a club up here. He is an officer in the Cavalry, and is going into the 9th Lancers. He is very nice.

"At Professor Hughes's there was a very nice fresher called Abel Smith, who took me home in his hansom, also a man called Lord Doune,[3] and another man called Fraser-Mackenzie, who is in Lovat's Scouts and who

[1] Killed in action on July 9th, 1916 (acting-Captain) Frederick Granger Hall, Cheshire Regiment.

[2] Lennox and Douglas Harvey. Lennox was sent on horseback with a despatch on Oct. 28th, 1914, and was never heard of again. Douglas was sent with the 9th Lancers to make an attack by night on a village in France on Oct. 30th, 1914, was mortally wounded, and died immediately.

[3] Lord Doune, eldest son of the Earl of Moray, who is a second lieutenant in the Yeomanry and Royal Flying Corps, is reported wounded in to-day's casualty list.

"Three weeks ago it was announced that Lord Doune had been awarded the Military Cross for his gallantry and skill in attacking and destroying a Fokker."—*Times*, Friday, 23rd June, 1916.

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is going to settle in Rhodesia. A friend of mine up here, Jack Springman, who was at Harrow, wants to go in the Rhodesian Police, but I advise him not to. . . .

"The Harveys are cousins of the Bradshaws and the Goulds whom I stayed with in Wales and Scotland."

"How do you like Bournemouth? . . .

"Last Monday I had dinner with the Master of Trinity. He asks all the old Harrovians at Trinity to a dinner on the 5th of November. I sat between Lindsay Everard and a very nice fellow named Wood. After dinner we sang Harrow songs, and after every song the old Master would get up and say, 'I remember years ago,' or words to that effect.

"On Tuesday I got a day's hunting. Derrick and I trained to Huntingdon and then hacked out 10 miles to the meet, which was the 2nd of the season. In the morning we ran the fox back within a mile of Huntingdon and killed it. Once he ran up a tree and had to be got down. In the afternoon we ran bang in the opposite direction, and Derrick and I found ourselves at ½ past 3 14 miles from Huntingdon. We were mis-directed and went 3 miles out of our way. It was ½ past 6 by the time we got back, as after a day's hunting you have to walk your horse most of the way. There was a lovely moon, which we watched get up, first red and the size of a cart-wheel, and then yellow and full.

"On Thursday I heard Mr. B. was up here, so I asked him to come to lunch. He came and was very earnest. He is up here with Dr. Torrey, whom unfortunately I could not go to hear, as I was gated last week at ½ past 8 as the result of only going to 3 Halls instead of 4. Not a very serious offence, but twice repeated! Several people I know went and did not care for it at all.

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"On Friday and Saturday I went home, as you know, to shoot. We had a simply splendid time, and the only fly in the ointment was Charlie's not being able to come, as they are moving into a new building or something of the sort.

"On Friday (we did not get there till past 12 and started by 1) the guns were Uncle Rupert, Jamie (who had come all the way from Glasgow at one day's notice), self, Bosanquet, Sampson (one of the partners in my shoot here), and a very nice fellow named Parker,—he is a B.A. and has a very nice shoot up here.

"We shot Big Hammerwood in 4 hours!! and got 82 pheasants and a few ducks and rabbits. We had lunch at ½ past 2 in the hut; it took only about 10 minutes.

"Bosanquet had to be motored back to Sevenoaks that evening, as he was shooting at home next day.

"On Saturday there was a splendid white frost and the sun was bright not glaring. Mr. Partridge came (I had asked Mr. Hausberg and Dr. Wallis, but both were engaged). A fellow called Neilson, who was at Rugby, came down by the early train, and the rest were as on Friday.

"We shot the Thornhill part, where I had not shot before. (It had been let while the boys were young.—M. W.) It is the best shooting I have had at Hammerwood from the point of view of high birds. I shot one which must have been 120 feet in the air. It was a shot in a hundred, but most of the shooting was very pretty there, as the land is in deep valleys, with shaws running along the top, so that you can drive the birds from shaw to shaw over the guns in the valley below. Nonie and Mr. Pearson came to luncheon; she seemed very happy. Uncle Rupert's dog made a

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beastly noise through excitement, but I believe he did retrieve some birds. We only just caught the train back. . . . During a change the lid of a hamper in which I was taking back some birds came undone, and they all emptied on the platform; luckily we had 20 minutes wait and were able to pick them up again.

"I had tea with Derrick's people. His mother, like you, is wonderfully young-looking. Everyone enjoyed the two days immensely. Our shooting here seems very small after it, but we enjoyed it all the same. Yesterday I went out with Parker, and we only got 3½ partridges and 2 pheasants and a hare. At any rate we had a very nice lunch in the pub.

"Last night I went to bed very early and feel all the better for it."

He loved to think that others were happy too. He enjoyed this shooting so much that he wrote to a great friend:

"I am so sorry that you did not come to-day. We had a ripping day, 135 pheasants, 10 ducks and about 20 rabbits. If it is a question of £ s. d. I will make my Christmas present to you a license, train-fare and tip. So do come. Come on Monday. Big Hammerwood again and some ducks."

The same friend about this time lent him some money, when he was, as often happened, stranded for want of it. He wrote:

"With many thanks I return your talents fourfold. Please devote the extra one to your fold! (His friend was a clergyman.) Thank you very much indeed. I could never have left the Curzon Hotel but for you. I should be there now!"

In February, 1912, George had a bad hunting acci-

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dent, which affected his health a good deal afterwards. In the autumn of 1911 he had had a slight concussion. Walking out of a shop at Cambridge, he had run into some scaffolding erected outside the door, and had known nothing more until he woke to consciousness to find the shopman and a doctor bending anxiously over him, and now again he had a concussion of the brain, besides breaking his collar-bone badly.

The weather was very wet, and there were an unusual number of hunting accidents that season, and, of course, George had to fare worse than most of his friends!

It was so like him to write to his mother that his illness would be "really economical," as he would be unable to spend money while he was laid up, and to telegraph to his uncle that he had had a spill and cracked his collar-bone and got a concussion, but he was "well and happy, and there was nothing to worry about." There *was*, however, something to worry about, for Charlie went up to see after the invalid, and found that he would not keep still, and as a result the bone would not unite.

He and Charlie wrote a joint letter; it was written by Charlie and composed by George:

My Dearest Mother,

It is so nice of you to send C. to cheer me up. He is such a dear boy. I can't think how you can spare him!

Thank you so much for your donation, which is most useful, as I had to tip hundreds of people who carried me off the bloody battlefield (C. keeps writing things that I don't want him to) (rot).

I hope you were not very much annoyed when you heard of my misfortune—and so on.

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He also wrote himself with his left hand an account of his accident. In this letter he says:

"I was jumping a post and rails," but, as a matter of fact, he did not know exactly what had happened as, with a bad concussion and the collar-bone broken in two places and splintered, he had had to motor thirty miles back to Cambridge.

His mother was in London, and he came up to her at Brown's Hotel, was X-rayed, went into a nursing home and was operated on. The bone was wired, and the splinter which was removed he had made into a scarf-pin, which he sometimes proudly exhibited to his friends.

His popularity was very evident, his room became a bower of flowers, and it was difficult to keep him quiet in his convalescence. He dictated the following note to his mother, who was too ill just then to visit him: "We did a most successful operation between us this afternoon, and I have a very pretty piece of bone to show you. Unless I get complicated septic trouble I may pull through all right. I hope I shall. Your azalea is beautiful and graceful, and reminds me of you! . . . Everyone is very kind to me here, and I like the room very much. I hope you had a good night."

A day or two later he wrote himself:

"I hope my operation did not worry you; by the way, did it not establish your belief in the efficacy of prayer. (This referred to his nervousness beforehand, and a conversation he had had on the subject.) The Doctor has just been, and said my case wasn't so bad that you need feel not being able to come and see me. It is only I who feel it."

He was soon able to leave the home, and as it was

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difficult to keep him from doing things that were bad for him, it was a good thing when the family went down to Hammerwood for what proved to be the last Easter holidays which all spent together at home.

As Mrs. Whidborne had been ordered to Baden-Baden by Sir Bertrand Dawson, the house was announced to be let, and the family left their home in England for what proved to be an absence of two years, returning in May, 1914, just before the outbreak of the war.

The summer of 1912 was spent in Germany and Austria, then came a long sojourn in Switzerland and an interesting motor drive through France to Boulogne *via* Vichy and the Loire district.

This travelling was made in a large Napier car, which had been fitted up with a long sofa-like seat, designed by Theodore Chambers, an authority on cars, in order that his sister might be able to travel lying down, on account of her health. It would hold any number of children and a great deal of luggage, and was named by the family "The Home," as for so long it was the only domicile they had!

It was driven by a wonderful young chauffeur, Reece, who, in the two years abroad, had no accident during the several thousand miles that he drove.

Travelling by motor has been a favourite mode of journeying on the continent during the last ten years, rather resembling the old way of a hundred years ago, when the richer people travelled in their own carriages, but with the advantage of being able to escape the monotony of some of the long dull roads that had to be traversed before reaching the lovely scenery, and with the additional superiority over those days, of clean and comfortable night-quarters, even in the smaller inns.

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As such travelling will be impossible for some time, a short account of these wanderings will be included in this chronicle, especially as George was able to join the party at intervals.

During the absence of their mother from England the boys used 8 North Street, Westminster, the house of their uncle and aunt as their headquarters, meeting their sisters there when coming out for the holidays, and always receiving a warm welcome, in addition to counsel and help in the many difficulties inseparable from youth.

Rita and Dora were at school at Sherborne, and Elfrida and Rosabel travelled with their mother.

During her absence George also had a second home at the house of his friend Derrick Gunston, whose mother, Mrs. Hartopp, lived in Grosvenor Gardens. This made a great difference to his happiness, and he warmly appreciated the kindness of the whole family; even the old butler welcomed him when he went to the house.

Other friends also treated him in an exceptionally hospitable way during his "homeless existence." Their names will come into his letters, as he always liked his mother to know about them, even if her invalid life prevented her from knowing them personally.

At this time George was at Cambridge, Charlie at Sandhurst for the last term, Seymour at Repton also for the last term, and it was awkward for a large family to have no settled home, but all worked out well; wherever the Whidbornes settled down they made friends, and they learned invaluable lessons, which our insular prejudices often prevent our learning in a short tour on the Continent.

When the time came to leave England the car was

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not quite ready, and so the party for Baden had to go by train, making the journey by short stages.

Mrs. Whidborne was accompanied by her doctor, Dr. Wallis, her friend and companion, Miss Frida Weber, Elfrida, Rosabel, her nurse "Nana" and a maid, Minnie Bates.

They went over the beautiful Ardennes, by Lille to Brussels, where Elfrida saw the field of Waterloo, and then on to Metz, where a number of English officers were staying in order to see the German manœuvres. They looked very much bored, and one wonders how much they were allowed to see of the inner workings of the great "Machine"! The Zeppelins were *very* much on view, and by the time the travellers arrived at Baden-Baden, they had become quite a common sight. The long silvery pencil-shaped monsters sailed about daily, gleaming in the sun, and tourists were permitted to take expeditions in one of them at the rate of £10 per head. This particular Zeppelin was destroyed by fire in its shed at Oos just before the Whidbornes left Baden-Baden. Mrs. Whidborne described it in letters home as inspiring a "night-mare" feeling and as looking like "a great shark with fins."

The Sanatorium to which Mrs. Whidborne had been sent merits some description. It was run by a certain "Herr Dr. Dengler," of great renown in certain circles. Before the catastrophe of the war a visit to one of these gigantic establishments, preferably in Germany, was a fashionable method of getting rid of many ailments. English, French, Russians, Americans and the rich nationalities of South America met together, and were all treated more or less alike. The house was ideal, with its large airy rooms and all the latest hygienic improvements. Fat people became thin, and thin

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people put on weight rapidly. Nervous patients were "hosed" and laid in divers baths, and a little healthy, though rather brutal, treatment was meted out to the fanciful invalid.

The Doctor ruled with despotic power—he was really a very clever man and a diviner of character, and managed his large family in a wonderful way. Some liked him, some hated him, but all finally obeyed him—or departed. But to the really suffering or sorrowful he was extremely kind, and his wonderful "cures" were a great topic among the new-comers, though Mrs. Whidborne noted at the time that he did not seem to like the English nation very much.

The building, standing high up above the hot but clean little town, in the midst of a park filled with roses and flowering shrubs, and with each room possessing its own balcony, had great attractions in the beautiful months of May and June, but the Whidbornes were glad when the "cure" was ended and the car came out, and they left Baden-Baden for the Black Forest.

Little Rosabel hated the foreign customs and food at first, asking one day when she had been sick if "that was what is known as home-sickness."

George wrote to his mother whilst she was in the sanatorium as follows:

8 North Street.

Thank you awfully for your letter. It was the first I have had from you since the post card on arriving. I don't know if anything was wrong. I am awfully sorry that you are not so well. I go to Camp in 10 days, then come back here for a bit, and after that go to Pirbright with the Coldstream for 6 weeks, after which I

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hope to come out and see you. I don't know whether I have passed my exam. or not, I think I have—anyway I hope so.

Charlie has just gone out to the levée, he looked awfully fine in his uniform.

I went to the "Hundred Years Ago" Ball the other night in a blue coat with brass buttons and a very tall collar and black cravate.

(This ball caused quite a sensation during that gay season.—M. W.)

I am feeling a good bit better, though rather sleepy in the daytime, as I have been dancing a lot.

I went to the Opera with Aunt Gina last night and saw the Russian dancers. I also saw Cousin Ethel yesterday; she is awfully kind to me. I am going to lunch with Aunt Hilda to-day. I met her at a ball that I went to last night. Poor Mr. Bradshaw has had a sudden attack of pneumonia. . . .

C.V.O.T.C. Camp,
Bulford,
Salisbury Plain.

We came here yesterday for 10 days—(t)raining. I left out the "t" by mistake, but my pen was more truthful than I. I like camp, but it is beastly when everything is wet through.

I have a very annoying horse, which is very uncomfortable to ride. We have to groom our horses twice a day, the first time at 5.30 before we get any breakfast. When we arn't grooming our horses we are feeding them. About the best thing they do for you here is the feeding, which is really quite good. As a matter of fact, everything would be all right if it would keep fine. The camping reminds me of my "safari," except that

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instead of *my* ordering 40 people about, about 40 people order *me* about!

I hope the six weeks I am with the Coldstream there won't be such a cold stream constantly down my back! That's not bad considering how I am feeling.

Charlie's photographs are very nice. I think you will like them. I must have mine done one of these days in case I die. What would posterity do if it had no recent photo of me to preserve?

Derek's sisters are very nice, but they want Votes! I think you ought to meet them. . . .

I went to the White City with the Bradshaws on Saturday. We had great fun. I could not speak afterwards, I had shouted so much in the match.

9 Sidney Street,
Cambridge.

I am up at Cambridge again, after a very enjoyable time last week. Lords was very exciting. Cambridge beat Oxford, and Harrow had a very exciting and sporting game against Eton.

Charles Blount, who used to be at St. Andrew's, made 135. There were 4 boys in our house playing.

I stayed in rooms at 25/- a week, bed and breakfast, last week. They were very hot, but the landlady was the old governess of some people called Romilly, who I know slightly, so the rooms were very clean. . . .

I have to join the regiment on August 7th in London and be drilled up and down the yard for a fortnight, after which I am going on army manœuvres with them. . . .

I went to Lady Salisbury's ball, which I enjoyed awfully. Everyone had orders or medals (except me), even the Guards had their coronation medals.

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George spent part of this long vacation with the Guards, and the rest of the time before he went abroad with friends.

He had a happy visit to the Bradshaws at Cowes.

Egypt House,
Cowes, Sunday.

. . . On Monday I went to stay with a Lady Lloyd-Mostyn, a friend of Cousin Ethel's, for the 21st birthday of a friend of mine—Wynn. His father is the Master of a pack of hounds—Watkin Wynn. He is a sort of king up there.

On Wednesday I went to Lindsay Everard's coming of age. Hiram and Derrick were there. There were over 40 people staying in the house. . . .

If my birth certificate comes in time I am attached on Friday next. I am not looking forward to it. . . .

It is very nice down here. Unfortunately it has rained all the time so far. The King is here and everybody else.

My cold makes me feel rather stupid and depressed.

He goes on to describe the house-party, which he always did to his mother, ending up with "the Bradshaws are really delightful—all of them. The little boy[1] wears yachting clothes in full."

His mother was once talking to his hostess of this time about his lateness in getting up in the morning, and said she hoped it had not been a great inconvenience with the servants. "No," said his kind friend, "my butler was so fond of him that he always saved 'Mr. Whidborne's' breakfast for him, and gave it to him on a little special table when he came down." His cold no doubt on this occasion made him worse than usual.

[1] Victor Bradshaw, 2nd Lieut., 15th Hussars, 1916-17.

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Charlie was to meet his people at Ulm, and to spend his last month with them before joining his regiment in India, having been gazetted to the 14th (King's) Hussars. His mother had therefore to leave the beautiful Black Forest after a short sojourn, and travel on to Ulm. The motor drive was through a part of the country which those who go by train do not see, and the pretty little villages set in the park-like uplands, with the picturesque men and women working together in the fields, were a source of great interest to the motorists, who for several days went through lovely country, seeing no one but the peasants. At the smaller towns where they stopped for rest they also saw the real life of the German people, and admired the signs of thrift and cleanly habits, which are not always conspicuous in the larger cities.

Tübingen, the old university town, was "en fête" when they passed through, and the streets were full of the students, who, with their coloured velvet caps, are garbed in such a different manner from our own young aspirants to learning.

They could not stay long at Ulm, as Charlie had been ordered before he left Sandhurst to report himself to the military authorities if he stayed there longer than a week. The soldierly figure of the young Englishman attracted attention in the hotel where all the uniformed officers dined, and the place bristled with fortifications and sentries; so after seeing the cathedral "with the highest tower in Europe," up which some of the party climbed, and admiring the beautiful old burgher houses, the Whidbornes went on to Munich, where they were joined by Rita and Dora, who had come out with the Theodore Chambers family, who were going to spend the holidays with them. The children enjoyed the

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museums there, so filled with art treasures, and when tired of imbibing knowledge, they made excursions to the surrounding lakes, and feasted in the out-of-door restaurants with which that part of the world abounded. The people of Germany are in some ways more clever than ourselves, and if only our government would allow more of these Arcadian resorts in our country, there would probably be less drunkenness.

As the whole party could not henceforward travel in the car, the children took it by turns to go by train with some of the older people, and the memory of the magnificent scenery that they saw that summer has been, in spite of the extremely rainy weather they experienced, a never-ending source of enjoyment to them in the less happy days that have followed.

On the way from Munich to Achensee the car was held up at the German-Austrian frontier on a wet evening for an hour, whilst the custom house officials measured every little bit of it with string and searched every corner of it for contraband goods. Not many cars were to be met with, owing to the regulation that a sum of several hundred pounds had to be deposited when one entered the country—to be paid back on exit.

This was the only place in Germany or Austria where incivility was met with, the old inn-keeper at the Scholastika Hotel (since burned down) evidently considering the large English family undesirable company, amidst his crowds of native tourists.

Seymour joined the travellers here—in a characteristic way coming out with insufficient funds, so that he had to live on chocolate, and pawned his watch to an hotel waiter at the magnificent Regina Palast Hotel at Munich, where he had expected to meet his people. This man was very kind to him and gave him rooms for

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the night, and afterwards he wrote a grateful and admiring letter to the boy whom he had befriended.

Seymour arrived at Achensee at midnight. He came to the wrong station, and had to be driven twenty miles in a horse landau over lonely mountain roads. He was looking thin and tired, but as usual was serene in temper.

George refers to this in his letters:

Wellington Barracks,
August 7th.

I settled in here to-day. I get worked pretty hard. Three parades a day, sometimes in the ranks and sometimes as an officer. I had to give orders to-day for the first time in my life. The sergeant made the squad go to the other side of the yard; so I fairly had to shout. All the officers are very decent to me.

I met Hawarden[1] at the Gages; luckily he is in this battalion.

Tennyson's brother I know up at Cambridge. I am dining with him "on guard" at St. James' to-night. There is a man called Bourne-May,[2] who was at St. Andrew's.

I have no bedding for to-night, so I am going round to North Street to try and borrow some of Uncle Theodore's.

I hope that will be all right if I pay for the washing!

My uniform was nearly all right when I turned up this morning, except I had a stiff white collar and black tie when I ought to have had a khaki collar and tie, also —it may interest Charlie—I only needed one strap on my belt and not both.

[1] Lord Hawarden died of wounds during the retreat of Mons.

[2] Captain J. B. S. Bourne-May, Coldstream Guards.

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Will you tell Uncle Theodore that living is a bit more expensive here than I thought it would be as nothing is provided. I dined "on guard" to-night at St. James' Palace. There were 12 all together, 4 Coldstream, 2 Horseguards and 6 guests. I am dining there again to-night.

I have to get up earlier than usual as my first parade is at 8 o'clock. I feel very well, and think the drill is good for me; anyway I suppose it is bound to smarten me up a bit.

Wellington Barracks.

I spent Saturday night at Hammerwood, where I saw Seymour.[1] Did he turn up safely? I really think he is worse than I am! . . . On Saturday we start on "Brigade" training. As it has simply poured every day lately, the prospect is not cheerful. I am enjoying myself quite all right, and feel very fit. I hope you are. I am going to be photographed for your sake!

As the famous blue waters of the Achensee were dulled by the rain and the hotel proved to be rather a failure as a place for a long stay, Charlie and his uncle set off to look for a suitable hotel. This they found at Berchtesgaden, close to Salzburg. They also ran up to Bad Gastein, where they lunched with Sir Alfred Mond, who was chairman at that time of the Land Tax party in the House of Commons (it was at the height of the Land Tax fight).

It was a joke in the family that their uncle loved travelling so much that he thought nothing of running from one end of Europe to the other for a few days.

[1] At the vicarage, his uncle, the Rev. Rupert Strong, being vicar of Hammerwood.

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He always managed to travel comfortably with an extraordinarily small amount of expense, and was better than any courier could have been, having his Baedeker and the map of Europe at his finger ends, always stopping at the right places for meals and procuring charming rooms at an hotel, after it had been pronounced full, by his persuasive ways with the "maître d'hôtel."

That was a wonderful drive to Berchtesgaden by Tegern See and Schliersee, where some of the rich visitors were disporting themselves dressed in beautiful silken peasants' costumes on the shores of the lakes, by Rosenheim, past the romantic island of Herrnchiemsee, made famous by the mad King of Bavaria—through blue ranges of mountains to Reichenhall, near which the motor had to be towed in an undignified way by horses. "Verboten" is a common word in these territories, and as it is a dangerous road, the authorities forbid much motoring, but as it considerably shortened the way, the car was allowed to be counted as a carriage —for a consideration!

The month of August was spent in this lovely part of the Tyrol. The lakes of this country are deservedly famous, and quite unlike those of Switzerland and Italy. The König's See, near Berchtesgaden, is like a Norwegian fiord, and those who would see its inner beauties are rowed in large flat-bottomed boats by men and women dressed in peasant dress, who propel them with the same action as the Venetian gondoliers, whilst the Hintersee is absolutely different, a little gem of gentle beauty, surrounded by splendid fir woods. Berchtesgaden was an ideal spot for expeditions, and innumerable picnics took place, where there was always the excitement of searching for the rare flowers with which the hills and forests abounded.

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The children made great friends too with the charming peasants and shopkeepers of the interesting little town, going to see their simple dances and acting (always under the direction of the local priest), and listening to their national music.

The sad incident of this time was Charlie's departure for India, which all felt very much. He had climbed the Watzmann mountain with his uncle, and the Schonfels-spitze with Seymour, and, as Marcus Chambers, his godfather and uncle, had joined the party here, it had been one of the most enjoyable times of his life.

The journey from Salzburg by Zellam-See to Innsbruck was much spoilt by the rain, but even that could not totally disguise the beauties of that lovely country, made famous by the brush of the artist MacWhirter. His "June in the Austrian Tyrol" was a picture that was seen over and over again, the flowers making a kaleidoscopic scene of colour in the fields.

Of course, punctures caused some untoward vicissitudes, but the new motor roads of the continent are splendid, and the Napier skimmed along with a delicious motion, never demurring at anything she was asked to do, even climbing placidly over the Brenner and the Jaufen Pass, with its marvellous "hair-pin corners," down into the interesting "Andreas Hofer" country, near Meran. The latter pass had only recently been opened, and the road at the end was unfinished and almost impassable, but it was late, and the travellers would have had to go miles round to get to Meran, where they were to sleep, if they turned back, and rain was beginning to fall, so Theodore, Seymour and the chauffeur hauled waggons of stone out of the way, and the car was slowly steered in the dusk along the side of

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a steep precipice, entering the town to be received by the "Road Custodian" with a demand for "Zehn Kronen" —to which Theodore Chambers replied, "Schlechtes Wetter, schlechter Weg, zehn Kronen?"

It was so cold that year that the Stelvio Pass was already closed owing to the deep snow, and as the car came out of Meran, with its sunny vineyards and rosy apple orchards, on the way to Landeck, cold blasts met the occupants from the great snow-clad Ortler and its sister mountains. The Arlberg Pass into Switzerland was negotiated in a storm of snow, and there are photographs of the car making its way through white drifts, as if it were winter instead of only the beginning of September.

Weesen, on a lovely calm lake, was chosen for the first resting place after crossing the frontier, and, sad to say, the elder girls had to return to England from there with their uncle, aunt and boy cousins, Gervase and Roy.

Before the day for leaving came, however, their uncle took the older children up for the night to the Klausen Pass. Eustace Strong, who had come out, went with them, and he, Theodore Chambers and Seymour climbed to a peak some two or three thousand feet above the road, from which they had a very fine view to the West towards the Titlis and Dammenstock.

On the way back from this expedition there was an exciting scene with the gendarmes who were responsible for collecting the "road-dues." The chauffeur had not seen the German notice board telling them of it, so on their return journey they found a cordon of police stretched across the road ready to seize them and take them away to durance vile if they did not pay an exorbitant fine!

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The northern part of Switzerland appeared to the travellers to be very pro-German and very antipathetic to strangers, and these fines seemed to be a way of helping the local finances when they were low. The men realised that the English motorist would pay a large sum in order not to be kept hanging about for a legal affair.

In the meantime George was finding the weather in England anything but ideal, writing as follows:

Attached 1st Coldstream Guards,
On Manœuvres,
Swaffham.

We are having it pretty wet. I daresay you have seen the photographs of our camp in the papers.[1]

We were sent up here last Saturday week, and on arrival were sent back to London for 3 or 4 days till it had dried up a bit. We came back on Wednesday, and I think it has rained every day since, except one.

The first two days here with the whole battalion at once was awful, just like my first term at Harrow, but it is all right now, and I am enjoying it very much. My company is No. 7; Major Pereira commands it. He is an awfully nice man and has about 15 medals. The ensign is Lord Petre; he is a very silent man. I think, although he lives in Essex, he is of a Devonshire family. I haven't got anything to do, as Petre does everything Pereira doesn't. There is a boy called Beckwith Smith,[2] whom I met at the Gages; he is very decent to me; also there is a very nice man called Tollemache, a cousin of Aunt Hilda. I met him at

[1] George had sent a picture post-card showing the tents completely surrounded by water.

[2] See p. 241, footnote.

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some people's where I stayed the night the other day. Hawarden, whom I also met there, is also in the battalion.

Attached 1st Coldstream Guards,
On Manœuvres,
11 Sept.

We have had a wet time of it, but we have got back to our tents, for which we are duly grateful, and to-day we have had nothing to do but lie in the sun, which has appeared for the first time for days. . . .

I hope to come out to you on next Tuesday week. We get back to London to-morrow week, and I shall cross to Dieppe on the Saturday night and stay the Sunday with the Hoziers and then come straight to Lausanne. Is that right? . . . I will tell you everything I have been doing "face to face." On Monday morning we left Swaffham and marched 21 miles, and slept by the edge of the road. On Tuesday we fought and slept out. It poured with rain. On Wednesday we marched 15 miles here in the rain.

Poor Charlie leaves England to-day. Luckily he has a fine day. This weather almost makes me want to go to India with him. I am looking forward awfully to seeing you. I hope Uncle Eustace will be with you when I arrive.

Instead of meeting the car at Lausanne, he was able to join it at Lucerne, and much enjoyed the drives with his mother, Miss Weber, Elfrida, Eustace Strong and Seymour, Rosabel and her nurse having travelled on to Lausanne by train.

As his mother was obliged to rest a good deal on these journeys at the places where they stopped for the night or nights, the boys were able to explore the neigh-

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bourhood, and on one occasion went over to Interlaken from Thun in order to get a good view of the Jungfrau, but the maiden was coy and annoyingly hid her face in a thick autumn mist. However, on the way to Château d'Oex on a lovely morning just after passing Spiez, before entering the beautiful Moser-Simmenthal, the veil was lifted, and there was the exquisite pure outline of the Jungfrau range, shining through the sun. That was a wonderful drive. The autumn tints were in perfection, and an unusually good sunset and clear evening crowned the joys of the day. The cows were all coming down from the mountain pastures to their winter quarters, and the peasants often refused to let the car pass; the boys did a little amateur "cow-herding," driving the animals out of the way, to the amusement of their Swiss owners.

The colouring of the shores of the Lake of Geneva and the Rhône valley were exceptionally brilliant that year; crimson cherry trees and golden beech stood out against the purple haze of the mountains, and gorgeous sunsets filled the artistic souls of the party with that sadness which comes with the contemplation of short-lived perfection.

George left his mother at Lausanne, where she had gone in order to consult a renowned Swiss specialist, Dr. Muret; knowing that before he saw her again she would have to undergo a dangerous operation, he was depressed at leaving her. He also felt misgivings about his chance of entering the Coldstream Guards.

Before his return to England he and his mother took a drive together through the brilliantly golden woods at the back of the town, and both of them often recalled the happiness of that day, in spite of the shadow which was hanging over them.

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He went with his mother to choose the room at the "Clinique" or nursing home in which she was destined to spend six long months, and left her at the station with regret.

Paris,
Saturday.

I was so sorry to leave yesterday. . . .

You are looking wonderfully beautiful in spite of your being ill. Did you buy "Mrs. Ames"? (A book he had recommended.—M. W.)

I am afraid Harry was rather like me at times, especially over the Suffrage. . . .

I don't think I said good-bye to Nana. . . . I hope you will like your home, and that they won't ill-treat you very much in it.

Just at this time European affairs were in a very unsettled condition, as the following extract from Theodore Chambers's letter to his sister will show:

October 11, 1912.

Everything of interest is taking a back seat before the European crisis. This monopolizes all attention. Home Rule, Land Campaign, everything fades before the over-powering interest and anxiety. I think it looks exceedingly dangerous, and one cannot tell what three months may bring about. Yesterday all the Bourses had panics, Paris, Berlin, London and New York.

There is no doubt the position is highly critical. The papers have sent out all their leading war-correspondents, and I fancy everybody believes it will end in a general conflagration, although they hope for the best.

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Lloyd George has postponed his land campaign altogether, and wisely. It is not the time for such a thing. I find everyone is nervously serious and seriously nervous about it. The *Times* has sounded a very serious note with regard to the future. For months to come everyone will be watching Europe and every corner of it. It will be a wonderful game of chess to see played before one's eyes.

This view of the future was held by the more serious Swiss people, their dangerous position in the midst of hostile countries giving them "furiously to think." Their army was good but small, and as in peace-time they were the "playground" of Europe and, in fact, of all the continents, so they felt they might easily become the "battlefield" of nations.

It may well have been that their preparedness in pouring their well-drilled troops on to the frontier two days before war was declared saved them from the fate of Belgium.

The peace conference between Italy and Turkey was taking place at Ouchy, and the delegates were to be seen daily about the streets, but there was a feeling of unrest in the air, and the Balkan war caused a great deal of talk, and not only talk—for the Swiss sent out doctors and nurses and Red Cross comforts in a most sympathetic way.

Friends at home were nervous about the Whidbornes staying out in Switzerland—for, wrote one, "You might not be able to get back to England if a European war broke out!"

At this time Seymour, Derrick, Gunston and George shared rooms at 35 Trinity Street, and happy times they had together, as a letter from George shows:

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University Pitt Club,
Sunday.

You will see by my address that I have come safely back. I had a very nice time at Dieppe and also at Hammerwood, where I was for two whole days all alone. It was simply lovely. Fine autumn days, which I spent shooting. . . . Wasn't that a lovely drive we had through the beech woods and after! Seymour is up here. I hope he is happy. Our rooms are very nice. I do wish you could see them. We have a grey wall-paper and dark blue covers. Mr. Brown, my landlord, wishing to congratulate me, said that even if I had got a shop-keeper in to do them for me the pictures could not have been done better.

I have ridden nearly every afternoon, but I work in the afternoon now as well as the morning and evening. I went out with the Cavalry yesterday. I am taking the A. pass.[1]

I have just found a franc which, so far as I can remember, Rita gave to me in the long-ago to present to Elfrida! How am I to get it to her? Poor Mother, I wish I could bear some of this for you. I am sure you would not mind swapping some for some of my history. . . .

He had to go in for his exam. whilst his mother was still extremely ill, and his anxiety was great. He wrote charming letters to her, but the two anxieties coming together were a trial to him.

In one of these letters he writes about having heard that his mother bore the illness well:

[1] George, Gunston and their friend Douglas Harvey were in the cavalry division of the C.O.T.C.

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"I think it is so sporting of you, and I only hope I shall be able to be half so brave when my time comes for something to happen to me.

"Everybody asks after you. I had a letter from Lady Blanche, who is in bed, wanting to know how you had got on, and everyone else is just the same. . . . I have got through the first of my 'A' exam, which is all I have heard of so far, so that is a piece of good news for you.

"Uncle Theodore is coming down on Friday to greet Lord Robert Cecil, who is speaking here for the New Carlton.

"You need not worry about my hunting at present, as I shan't be going out for at least a fortnight, so don't worry about that. Seymour is very happy, and so am I.

"I have just been elected to the Bachelors' Club, which is a piece of good news for me, and I hope you are glad. . . .

"You can't think how glad I am that you are the least little bit better."

"I have had a rotten week, but I have only one more exam. I have done 3 hours this morning and have 3 more this afternoon.

"I had a day's hunting on Friday to clear my brain in the middle of the exam. I go home on Tuesday night for a week to shoot. I am going up to Yorkshire to stay with the De Lisles after that; I want to come out and see you when I can see you.

"I told you, didn't I, about Lord Robert Cecil's coming down here? Uncle Theodore and he came to supper, and talked in our rooms afterwards for over an hour. He is a keen Free Trader.

"Lennox Harvey is down here for a bit. He is

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coming to shoot at Hammerwood, and George Kekewich[1] and his brother, also Derrick and Alec Hardinge. Edward Wallis[2] and Dr. Wallis are coming over too, and Mr. Gardner."

University Pitt Club,

. . . The mountains round the lake of Geneva must be looking awfully nice now. Yesterday Derrick and I went out cub-hunting, and had to get up at 6.30. We left the stables at 8, and there was a dense fog, very cold and thick that you could not see more than 30 yards, making any idea of hunting silly.

We rode 8 miles to the meet, and then waited about till the fog cleared. We killed two cubs, but did not have a run.

"Miss Mima" is very well, and jumping beautifully. Please tell Nana that the saddle is very comfortable. . . .

I have plenty of work to do, and my coach is a very nice man. . . .

". . . I can't possibly make any plans for the vacation yet, and so much hinges on possibilities; anyhow, whatever happens, I hope to get out and see you at some time adjacent to Christmas.

"I went out hunting yesterday. . . .

"I had tea with Professor Hughes to-day. . . . Father's case seems to be universally admired. . . .

"I had a most amusing letter from Charlie; he seems to be expanding his sense of humour.

"They had a debate on 'Votes for Women' at the New Carlton, which I was unable to attend, as I had a lecture on 'Musketry' by the Sergeant-Major.

[1] Missing since Loos, and believed to have been killed.

[2] Temp. Captain E. Wallis, Royal Sussex Regiment, attached to King's Own Royal Lancaster Regiment, killed October 18, 1916.

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"Seymour seems quite happy, and I think he is getting on well. He rows! I ran 8 miles in an hour and a quarter the other day. I was so stiff I could hardly move for two days afterwards. It was for a bet! . . .

"Do you remember our drive through the beech woods and going into the cemetery to look at the view? Wasn't that a lovely day. It seems so extraordinary that you are still at Lausanne. . . ."

Bachelors' Club,
Piccadilly.

I am sure you would like to hear a little more of what I have been doing. First I stayed with the De L'Isles, which I told you about, then I came down and stayed with Derrick's people. We played golf at Ranelagh one day and went down to Stoke Poges. Then I went down to Lady Whitehead's. I ran with the foot-harriers and went to two dances. There was a delightful man staying there—I think Irish, Col. Chenevix Trench. He had a lovely car, which he was very good about letting me use, and he was quite amusing. Then I went up to Yorkshire again, and stayed with a fellow called Wales-Fairbairn. His father was joint-master of the York and Ainstey last year. I had a splendid day's hunting on a very good hireling. . . .

I heard of an awful tragedy the other day. Mrs. H. had a maid who had a chilblain on the end of her nose all the winter and hay-fever all the summer!!

Derrick and I were introduced to Sir Edward Carson at the 1900 club. There were only two other people in there, and we talked for about ½ an hour. He is most amusing and very much in earnest.

I met Mrs. Cobden-Sanderson at tea at the Whytes

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yesterday, and Mrs. Frazer at dinner at the Streathfields. She is Ruth Vincent, who sings at Covent Garden Opera. She was quite nice.

I will write to Harcourt soon.

His cousin, Harcourt Winnington-Ingram, was slowly dying at Weston. He had caught cold at the summer camp whilst at school at Sherborne, and had developed Bright's disease. He was only seventeen and the eldest boy in his family, and Mrs. Whidborne's godson. He died just after Christmas, 1912.

When home on leave in 1914 George looked meditatively at his cousin's photograph and said, "Poor old Harcourt, I used to be sorry for him, but I am not sure that he has not been the best off!"

His father read aloud to Harcourt during his long suffering the book which has helped so many, "The Gospel of the Hereafter,"[1] and it comforted him greatly. He had been brought up to believe in a real Heaven, and although he had no doubts or fears, yet, like most people when the next world is drawing near, he wanted to know more about the future life. When the end drew near, he welcomed the news that he was dying with a child-like faith that was sublimely simple and confiding, and calmly waited for the hour to come.

George was unable to come out to Lausanne for Christmas as he had hoped.

7 North Street.

I am just recovering from a nasty chill, and have been in bed since last Thursday. I got it from going

[1] The sequel to this book written since the war is *The Men who died in Battle*, by J. Paterson Smyth, D.D.

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on top of a bus—not extravagant you see—in my evening clothes. It was quite sudden. I am practically all right now. Whatever happens, I shall come out to you within a fortnight. Whatever happens, providing I am not a corpse!

I had to go up for my medical exam ever so much sooner than I expected—last Wednesday, in fact; they went right over me without a remark, and when on coming away I said, "When shall I hear the result?" they said, "In a day or two, but you need not worry," which sounds hopeful. . . .

I saw a good deal of Uncle Marcus last week. He is very nice. I will write again soon.

Yours as well as possible.

GEORGE.

"I have had a terrible disappointment. I can't come out to-day to see you. I have been looking forward to it for so long.

"The next two or three days will see the settlement of my plans."

The upset was probably caused by a hint that he had not much chance of getting into the Coldstream Guards, and it is doubtful if he would have gained his heart's desire if it had not been for the war. He had little influence with any military people, and once when someone offered to use the interest which he had, George refused to allow his mother to write about it, saying he would rather get in on his own merits or not at all.

Whilst their mother was in the nursing home the children stayed in the Hotel Cecil near by, and at Christmas time Seymour and his sisters spent their

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holidays there, going up to the Theodore Chambers at Champéry for a week. Their mother was still very ill, but they were able to see her daily, and they enjoyed the novelty of a foreign Christmas, which the Swiss keep in the German fashion, also making the advent of the New Year a far more important festival than in England.

His letters of 1913 and 1914 mention many friends.

Chelsea Barracks.

. . . The next day Derrick came back from Cambridge, and we had an evening together, though I was rather sleepy. Alec Hardinge came with us. The boat-race had been that day ; it was a very good one. Cambridge ought to have won, though we lost two men just before the race.

The next day I went up to stay with Arco, and had the best day's hunting I ever had. The Belvoirs' Saturday—and the best country. He gave me 2 horses, both very good ones. Lennox Harvey was out. He is in the 9th Lancers now.

On Monday I turned up here with a bad cold, having jumped into a stream on Saturday.

All last week I drilled casually. This week I have been more exercised.

When he was a little boy he was found tearing about, and when asked what he was doing he replied, "I want to get the exercise taken out of me." He found it always so extremely difficult to keep still.

"I managed to get away for three days at Easter, and went over to Dieppe and stayed with the Hoziers. I went to the theatre last night, and in walked Mr. and

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Mrs. Winston; Lady Castlereagh and about six politicians were in the seat in front of us.

"I went down to Hammerwood on Thursday last. I saw Elliott; he seemed a good-natured fellow."

The house had been let to some Americans, who proved afterwards to be undesirable tenants. George had not fully understood that his home was no longer empty, and on arriving at the house, he walked about as if it belonged to him. Going into the billiard room, to their mutual surprise, he found one of the new occupants, the daughter of the house, reclining in an arm-chair!

A little later he writes:

Bachelors' Club.

Yesterday I had luncheon with the Whytes. In the evening Lady Maude, Madeline and I went to a play, called "General John Regan," by George Birmingham, the author of "Spanish Gold" and the "Red Hand of Ulster." He is an Irish Prebendary, and very funny indeed. In the play an American visits a small Irish village which he says is the birthplace of General John Regan. The Irish doctor, who is, of course, Charles Hawtrey, invents a long story about the general, and the whole play is about raising a statue to the memory of this man, who really never existed. The plot is what you would call slight, but the play is very funny.

Lady De L'Isle and her son and daughter were there too. She is giving a ball at the Ritz, and I suppose I shall go.

I get rather bored at the barracks; between the parades there is nothing to do. You can't read, as there are always people talking in the ante-room. I have a room now in Ebury Street. It only costs 3/6 a

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night, so you can imagine it is nothing wonderful, but it might be worse.

To his sister he wrote:

My Dear Rita,

I am at Chelsea Barracks now, performing my military duties, as you remarked, though they hardly take the line you indicated in your letters. Duties so menial as those of your imagination are left more to the private soldier, whilst the officer works his intellect and powers of command rather than his hands, relegating the dirtier work to his subordinates!

I bought you a very nice birthday present a month or two ago. You have not, I suppose, got it by any chance? I am afraid I haven't.

All his life George had held fixed ideas as to the kind of girl he would choose for his wife, but, of course, his ideal at seven and at seventeen was not the same as at twenty-four. He was very humble as to his own "attractiveness," and it is doubtful whether the only girl he really cared for enough to marry was ever aware of his admiration. He told his mother that in his position of uncertainty about the future he could say nothing definite to her, as she was always meeting men of higher position than himself and with larger fortunes; also, he knew she admired clever men, and he did not consider himself sufficiently "brainy" to be acceptable to her.

As several years have gone by since then, the allusions to this, the one serious love-affair of his life, will not be omitted, as they show an interesting side of his character.

His attitude towards girls was peculiarly "detached." He liked them as play-fellows and friends, but there

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was no sign of "romance." He had seen some peculiarly happy marriages in his early life, and could not stand the modern attitude of speedy dissatisfaction with the partner chosen, prophesying sad results of some of the hasty "war-marriages," though he wished very much that he too had had a "lady-love" to ride away from in the old style!

Still more did he wish that he could have left a son, and he particularly hoped that, in case of his death, a Whidborne nephew would some day bear his name.

George soon took to London society, and as he was amusing and a good dancer, his list of engagements was a large one; but there is no doubt that he used up too much energy in amusement, and that his work suffered in consequence.

The hope of a possible marriage made him particularly anxious about passing his examinations for the Guards, and induced him to work harder after this than he had ever done in his life before.

Chelsea Barracks.

On Monday I dined on guard at the Bank of England with a fellow named Hawarden; he is head of Ashley Maude's family, who used to stay at Hammerwood. . . . "The Wildman" was also there. His name is Boscawen; he is Lord Falmouth's eldest son. Lord Falmouth is a great racing man and owner, but "The Wildman" does not follow in his footsteps.

I then went on to the Ritz to Mrs. Benyon's dance. I don't know anything interesting to tell you about her, except that her husband is Lord-Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire.

On Tuesday I went to Mrs. Bischoffsheim's dance, which was very "grand" and "wealthy"; the ballroom

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was lovely, and not many people were asked. Wednesday night I went to the Inverclydes; he is the head of the White Star Line and, I suppose, well enough off!

On Thursday night I went to dinner with Derrick's people, and went to bed! On Friday night I dined with Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton in Westminster; she is, I find, the mother of a friend of mine up at Cambridge, named Oliver Lyttelton. I went to Mrs. Bridgeman's dance, where I was introduced to your Lady Lyttelton and her daughter, with whom I was unfortunately unable to dance, being already engaged in another direction.

I sat at dinner that night next to the best girl I have ever met in my life so far. Her name is . . . Unfortunately she does not go to many balls, as she lives in the country. She is very pretty, etc., etc. The dance was most enjoyable, and we danced hard till past 3, when the dance stopped. I thought I might as well go along to the Ritz afterwards, and when I got there Mrs. Strickland's ball was going in full swing. I danced with . . . until a quarter to 5. It was great fun. I arrived back at my rooms at 5 to find a note from my servant, saying he was going to call me at 6.30, as parade was early next morning. Looking at it from an outside point of view, it made me roar with laughter.

. . . Derrick goes abroad in about a fortnight. What shall I do without him? This is a most awful week for me. I am picquet officer. I have to stay in barracks nearly all day and come at 11 every night, which effectually delays dancing.

My duties are to get up at 7.30 and smell the meat and see if it is good. At nine to superintend the distribution of bread and meat. At 9.15 to count the

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coppers in the sergeants' mess, usually 2 or 3 pounds worth. At 11 to walk all round barracks and see that everything is all right and turn out the guard; hear them their orders, etc. At 12 to visit the cookhouse, at 12.15 to go to the messes to see if there are any complaints about the dinners. Then to take the 2 o'clock parade, and to come in at 11 o'clock at night to turn out the guard.

Yesterday I played tennis with your Lytteltons. ——'s people came in the middle, and I was introduced to them. They told me she was going to ——'s ball, so I got leave from the adjutant to be out till 12 (which I am allowed one night in the week), and trotted off there after dinner. . . .

I went on to the ball, and managed to dance two dances with her when I had to rush off, and just got into barracks as it was striking 12!

"Lord Help us" (Lord Hawarden) and I each turned out our respective guards (1st and 2nd battalions), and then we went down to the kitchen and had a cockroach hunt; I slew about 50 and so did he. We did this more or less to drown our sorrow at having to leave our dance. He had been at Lady ——'s dance, where his favourite (pro tem) was gracious. . . .

To-night I am dining with some Irish people, the Carews, friends of Cousin Ethel.

Now excuse this long and very "worldly" letter. My mind doesn't always run on these things, and I have only written all this because I hoped it would amuse you.

He wrote a great many letters as long as this, some of them with amusing little pieces of gossip. He was always very careful not to retail unkind stories about

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people, but knowing how many hours of dullness his mother had to endure and how keenly interested she was in his doings, he wrote many diary-letters, giving an exact account of his daily doings.

It is pathetic to know how many of his boy playfellows have had their lives cut short like his own, and how many of the girls they knew must carry sad hearts for the rest of their lives with so many of their hopes buried in the graves of those they loved.

He often added to these confidential letters, "remember this is only for you."

In the spring just before his mother left the nursing-home, George came out for ten days, and although there was little to do, he thoroughly enjoyed the rest and change. Long drives through beautiful scenery are very satisfying to those with artistic sense, and the pinewoods and mountains at the back of the town of Lausanne can only be properly appreciated by those who have means of getting about otherwise than on their legs! He won the heart of his mother's devoted Swiss nurse, and with his charming manner made more than a passing impression on those kind people in the home who had been so good to her in her long and serious illness.

He made friends with the nicer people in the hotel, one of the best in Switzerland, where the children, who had been away from their mother so long, found sympathising friends in their anxiety about her. George remembered them with gratitude, writing:

Charanté,
Torquay.

. . . I was frightfully sad at leaving Lausanne and you on Thursday. I enjoyed it awfully every minute,

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especially being able to see so much more of you than I expected.

On Sunday afternoon I went and saw Uncle Theodore's new road and also the new house at Ilsham Manor, which is most successful. It is very solid and square—of grey stone, with granite windows, with diamond casements and a nice red roof.

Yesterday Aunts Connie and Ada, Daisy and I picnicked at Ludwell or Lydwell. Mr. Baker, the tenant, is a very nice man; he took us round the boundary (about a ¼ hour's walk) (after Hammerwood)!

We had our lunch by the old chapel.

To-day Aunt Lucy, D. and I drove to Exeter, stopping again at Lydwell. It was a very sunny day, and it looked very pretty. I love the red earth, and the grass is so green, especially after Switzerland.

Will you ask Miss Weber to ask Captain Abercrombie, if he is stopping in London on the way through, to let me know at the Bachelors' if he would care to have a meal with me there. Also please ask her to remember me to every one there, as though I had asked after them personally. I am sure she will do it satisfactorily! With love and thanks for giving me such a nice time. . . .

The Ilsham estate, which he mentions in this letter, had, owing to the duties at his father's death, to be developed, and concurrently with this, the old farmhouse had to be rebuilt. This had been very well carried out under the superintendence of Theodore Chambers.

Spring, 1913.

I had lunch with Cousin Ethel on Sunday. The Servian Prime Minister was there. He said Austria

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and Russia are practically certain to go to war this week. I wonder if it will mean a general bust-up. . . .

Derrick is going out to Canada in July. It is very sad.

I had tea with Alec Hardinge to-day. We met Lawrence and his brother,[1] who live at Ashdown Place. . . .

What did you think of the Grand National this year?

This refers to a conversation which he had had with his mother on betting when she had showed him something about the race in question. He had said that he would never dream of betting seriously on this event!

[1] Both killed in the war.

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CHAPTER V

HOME AND ABROAD—*continued*

LONDON—SWITZERLAND—LETTERS FROM ABROAD

On leaving the "Clinique Bonjour," where Mrs. Whidborne had been so long, she was ordered to Bex for the sake of the baths there, her kind physician, Dr. Chester, also considering the fact that it would be a good place for the younger children's holidays. Seymour had, like his brother, spent ten days at the Hotel Cecil in March.

The girls came out at Easter with their aunt, Miss Constance Whidborne, and Miss May Weber, and spent a very happy time in the beautiful Rhône Valley, which at that season and during the early summer is such a wonderful place for flowers. The best hotel is like a large country house standing in a park, and in the fields round it are lilies of every description, the famous wild narcissi and innumerable orchids (the party found about twenty different kinds during that spring).

Botanists, like the Rev. Henry Graham, who came over from Vevey and shared in the motor drives, found the road up to Villars a veritable "gold-mine," and those who were not scientific felt that the fields of Switzerland on a fine day in the month of May left very little to be desired as a feast for the senses, whilst the memories of the views of the wonderful mountains,

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valleys and rivers are extremely satisfying for mental refreshment afterwards. Other friends were there also, amongst them Colonel Picot and his daughter. Colonel Picot is now well known as the Consul at Berne, who has done so much for our prisoners interned in Switzerland. He was not one of those who ignored the "Hun" peril; and with the great knowledge he possessed of the East, and especially of Persia, he often lamented the short-sightedness of England in not obtaining the command of the Baghdad railway.

Theodore Chambers[1] also came out to Bex, bringing with him his friends the Kenderdines. Mr. Kenderdine and he were at this time working the Land Union together, and since the war the former has been instrumental in starting the Roehampton Home for disabled soldiers; whilst the latter, with Mrs. Gotto, formed the very useful "Professional Classes Relief Society." In that sunny valley, however, such horrors as wars were remote from their thoughts and the long expeditions in the car were a constant source of delight.

While on this visit it was settled that the family should remain out for another year, in order that Mrs. Whidborne should continue to be under the care of the doctor who had done her so much good, making Lausanne their headquarters and visiting places within reach of medical attendance.

One of the good points of the medical practitioners in Switzerland, which makes their reputation so world-wide, is that they are all near together, so that, if anything is wrong with the eyes, for instance, the patient is at once sent to a noted oculist—with the teeth to a famous dentist, and so on. In this way a person will often be under the care of several doctors at once. This

[1] Secretary and Controller of the War Savings Committee (1917).

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sounds costly, but the fees are so moderate, often being fixed by the income of the patient, that people in the hotels asserted that it did not cost more to come out and stay at the best hotels and pay the doctors' fees than to consult our own doctors in London, and they had the change of scene in addition. Possibly the latter point helps to make the cures for which the medical men of Switzerland are so renowned.

There are no doubt some quacks and humbugs even there, but as a rule the doctors are extraordinarily honest, not asserting that they have made a cure when this is not borne out by the patient.

Of course, this world-wide reputation brought people of all nationalities to the hotels, especially many of the nations who did not possess modern scientific men of their own. It was said that many of the Turkish and Balkan upper classes visited the town for advice, medically, as well as politically!

They came to consult Drs. Muret, Combe, Bourget and many others, but the most famous, owing to the wide nature of his skill, was Roux, about whom many stories were told. To a student of human nature the complex characters of the inhabitants of Lausanne at this time were a never-ending source of study, and the Whidborne party always enjoyed the many life-stories which were being enacted in that cosmopolitan centre.

Lausanne was a great place for aeroplane "concours," and the machines flew about like large swallows, daily skimming up and down the lake. One Sunday a man looped the loop over the market-place, and though the elders feared that there might be an accident, the small girls, Elfrida and Rosabel, were most anxious to see all that was going on. Their attitude towards an accident was "we don't want one, but if there is one, may we be

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there to see it"; and when one day an aeroplane really did fall down, fortunately into the lake, and the chauffeur was lucky enough to get some good photographs of it, great was the chagrin of the little girls that it had not happened when they were down by the quay.

The family spent a large part of the summer at the Hotel Cecil, driving out in the afternoons into the woods and spending hours under the pine-trees, going on when the weather became too hot to Mont Pelérin, with its wonderful view. The hotel high above Vevey, facing the Rhône Valley, and the Dent du Midi, with a view reaching to Neuchâtel on one side, and looking down the Lake of Geneva nearly as far as the end of the lake on the other, was such an attractive summer resort that the Whidbornes settled to take rooms there for the big family reunion, expected in September.

In the meantime the children's holidays were to be spent at a little place called Morgins, above Champéry, in Savoy, as it afforded safe rock-climbing, for the children were never satisfied unless they were risking life and limb in some adventurous expedition.

George was in the meantime in the full swing of the London season, and as usual trying to combine "dancing and cramming."

He wrote: Guards Club,
July, 1913.

. . . I really have been the limit in not writing all this time. Really my brain seems to have stopped working lately, and though I have many times almost sat down to write to you, yet always I have felt unable to. Everyone else, needless to say, has gone to the wall too, even Derrick, who left for Canada last Monday week, has not yet had a line wishing him luck. I really must write to him soon.

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I told you how I went down to see the girls at Sherborne. After that I did a week's picquet, which occupied my time very much.

I was going to have dinner with the Alfred Lyttel-tons to-night and to go to Lady Salisbury's ball afterwards, but my host is very ill, so I am dining alone here; I shall see the lady you refer to to-night, but I am very much afraid that is "all orf," as I am not sufficiently amusing or some other defect. "Sic transit gloria mundi," as they say.

It is no use "grabbing at a rainbow."

In G.N. Restaurant Car,
Train from Bingham to London,
July, 1913.

. . . I am looking forward to seeing you again awfully. I feel quite homesick to see you.

I go down to Pirbright to-night for a month, after which I leave the army—sad to say. That will probably be about Aug. 17th.

I shall then go to my crammer and find what work I have to do, and after starting it I hope to come out to see you.

I shall feel very sad at leaving—all the more so as I do not feel very confident of passing my exam.

Well, the London season ended for me on Saturday morning, when I went up to Arco at Kneeton till this evening, when I am on my way back.

On Friday I finished up the season by dining at the Sassoons and dancing afterwards. Who should be dining there but ——; she was very nice to me for a change, but now I haven't the faintest idea when I shall see her again. Last week she was not at all nice, but I notice it is only when . . . is there. I played tennis

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at the Lytteltons last week. You will be sorry to hear that Hermione Lyttelton had appendicitis the day after, but she is better.

I had lunch with Prince and Princess Lichnowsky at the German Embassy and their three little children. They were very nice to me, and very amusing. I think that if I cram in London in the winter I shall stay the week-ends with Arco, and hunt on Saturdays and Mondays with the Belvoir, and so be back fresh for my work on Tuesdays. I really can't stay in London all the week, and I can't cram out of London.

Of course, if it were all right about . . . I would not mind about my exam or worry about getting into the army. . . . You must excuse my continually reverting to the subject, but I find I continually am—sleeping and shaving, in my bath and indeed in most places!

How are you? A little better I hope, and fairly happy?

The polo has been great fun, and made me much stronger in every way. It has also been very companionable.

Here we are getting into London, and I must stop for a minute.

I am so glad about the Wilson money, especially for them, and it won't hurt you, will it?

I had some good tennis whilst staying with Arco—men's fours.

Derrick has arrived in Canada—between his being in Canada and your being in Switzerland and —— being about as far distant, I have felt rather lonely, though people are very nice to me on the whole, especially Derrick's people.

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Summer, 1913.
Bachelors' Club.

. . . I have had a very energetic time this week. . . . Last night I dined at the German Embassy with Arco, and met his sister and brother in law, the Ambassador, who were just going out to dinner with the King. She was awfully nice, and is very clever indeed with music and painting.

I went to call on Mrs. Winston this afternoon. Her little girl, Diana, was asked what she thought of the Admiralty (they have moved into it, and it is a very big house). She replied, "It is very nice, but very small after Blenheim." This was in all childish innocence, as it was true, but it sounds rather funny. . . .

The other evening Luigi Arco and I went to the Palace and saw Pavlova and the Russian dancers. She is wonderful.

The Review of the Brigade is to-morrow. I do hope it will be fine. I am taking Mrs. Hartopp and Madeline Whyte. . . .

I had to give my first public words of command the other day outside the barracks. I am afraid I did not do it very well.

I go down to Pirbright on Tuesday. . . . I have met some very nice girls lately. . . . I think you would like them all. . . .

Pirbright Camp,
Woking.

. . . I have been frightfully occupied. All the same I have thought about you lots of times, though never actually at convenient or possible hours to write.

As you will see, I am down at Pirbright. Every night last week I went up to London to dance. I catch the 7 o'clock train down in the morning, go on parade

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at 8.30 till 12 o'clock, and again at 2 till half past four, and then catch the evening train up to London. . . .

Tell me exactly how you are feeling yourself and what you do. . . . What do you like me to tell you? What I do and where I go and how I feel?

I feel very fit indeed, though sometimes I get a bit sleepy and cross, but I can make up sleep at any hour of the day almost.

I am not very good at shooting, which is what I am down here for—that is rather a drawback.

I am also very bad at golf, which is a bore. . . .

I am feeling better than I have for several years. I hope I shall remain so. It is a great comfort. . . .

Bachelors' Club.

I am so sorry I was so bad about writing while I was at Pirbright, but you can't imagine how hard it is doing correspondence from a tent.

Yesterday morning we were out on the Horseguards, practising for the trooping of the colours. It was frightfully hot. I have seldom been so hot in my life before, and yet I had scarcely anything on but my uniform.

I went up to Cambridge yesterday afternoon, and saw all my friends. I played polo for the first time on a pony lent to me. It is splendid exercise.

I danced every night last week, including Saturday, until 12 o'clock.

I am getting a bit better at golf.

I have to go on parade now, so good-bye.

August, 1913.
Pirbright Camp.

I expect I shall come out to you soon, but I am not sure yet.

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Thank you very much for your letter, but I am afraid it's not much use. (This was in reference to some advice to show the girl he admired what his real feelings were.—M. W.)

I hear Uncle Eustace is coming out to you too. I hope he will be there with me. . . .

We are doing Company training at present. . . .

I thought I might do a little climbing?

I went up to London yesterday and found Uncle Theodore and Aunt Gina moving into their new house (Number 8 instead of 7 North Street). It is really a lovely house. . . .

I should say the betting is about 2 to 1 against my getting in at present, though the market fluctuates—as they probably don't say—in the city. . . .

Life is very dull here, but last night I went to the Palace and saw Pavlova. She is really wonderful, and so is the whole Russian ballet. I saw a very good skit on them at the Hippodrome the other day.

A fellow comes on, caricatured as the chief male dancer, and makes a little speech in mock broken Russian. Read it out loud and it will be funnier.

Ladieski and Gentlemenovitch,

Madame Haveafallover (Anna Pavlova) will now present her turnski. I trust you will give her applauski. She will give you an encoreski.

If you do not give her applauski, she will give me socksovitch, and so have pity on Mysonikoff.

It is really very funny.

The men in the regiment are sometimes rather amusing. The other day we were judging distances over the Thames in Battersea Park. One of the sergeants got a distance wrong, and when he complained that

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Captain So and So had said the other day that it was —say 500 yards—one of the other men chirped in, "Yes, sergeant, but the tide's out to-day."

The Grenadiers have a select company called the King's Company, of which they are inordinately proud. All the men are over 6 ft. 6 or thereabouts. The other day as we were marching past St. James's Park with the storks in it, one of the men was heard to remark, "Say, Bill, look at the King's Company canaries."

I have played polo several times now; it is an awfully good game, but rather expensive in London, and yet hundreds of people play.

I may go and stay with Edward Tennant in Scotland before coming out to you, but his people won't be there.

There is a sale of the Battalion drums on Thursday. I may buy one if I am allowed to, but I daresay I shall not be allowed.

A two days' journey will carry the traveller from the London ballroom to the snow-clad mountains, and George, who was weary with the endeavour to spend the day in work and the night in play, was very glad to arrive at Arolla, after a brief visit to his family at Mont Pélerin. All the men of the party were setting off on climbing expeditions, but George elected to go alone, with a Champéry guide, on a ten days' excursion into the higher regions of Switzerland.

His letter-diary (the beginning of which is unfortunately missing) runs thus:

Hotel Carron,
Fionnay.

Sep. 3rd. I had breakfast in bed this morning at 8.30, and read for half an hour, then had a bathe in my

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little lake. It was bitterly cold, as the sun had not reached it, and I only went in twice. There was a regular "afterglow" when I came out—a sign of fine weather, a good omen I hope!

I left at about 2.30, and after about two hours came to the glacier Corbassière; soon after I had a splendid view of the Combin de Corbassière. After one and a half more hours I came to the Arrets of the Glacier de Poussière and the Grand Combin, with only one small cloud hovering over the summit. It is snow and ice practically the whole way up, only about two small patches of rock. An excellent cabane, 12 people in all, a French lady and her husband, who are going to do the Combin de Corbassière, and two English, who have the same intention.

I am very humble after my rebuff at Fionnay![1] After dinner I took a stroll. It was very cold, but not a cloud in the sky; the mountains very clear, first pink and now blue. It is nearly all snow. To-morrow we cross the glacier in front of the hut. *Later.* Did the Grand Combin all right.

Sep. 4th. Was too tired when I got in to write a word.

Sep. 5th. We did the Grand Combin yesterday. We left the Cabane de Poussière at 2.40, and crossed the glacier in front of it. Then struck up to the left under the Combin de Corbassière. We were roped soon after, as there were crevasses. On our right was a magnificent wall of ice. It was still dark soon after Edouard put out the lantern, and we turned sharp to our left up a very steep snow slope. At the top of this we stopped and eat some bread and drank some tea. Then still up. On our left a precipice overlooking the glacier of Pous-

[1] A man had been very rude to whom he had spoken.

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sière, which we had crossed earlier, and the Cabane. After an hour mounting fairly steeply all the time, came to a small ice wall about 20 feet—the first task—the rest came soon after. After about ten minutes we stopped at the foot of the ice wall and ate our breakfast in the sun. It was fairly warm and the breeze was slight, and I should have enjoyed it, but the ice wall made me too nervous!

After breakfast we started the ice wall; the first few steps my legs shook, but Edouard put his hand on them and they became all right. This wall was about 20 feet, and almost perpendicular. One had to make absolutely certain of each step. There was great relief on my part on reaching the top! Then we went down a steep slope to the right, across a crevasse and gradually bearing round to the left and mounting all the time till the summit. The summit is a cornice of snow; luckily the view was grand, there being no clouds but small ones in the valleys. The Dent du Midi and the Tour Sallières, with its Dome, and the Grand Ruan looked well, especially the Dent Jaune. This I did five years ago at Champéry.

Other mountains visible were the Mont Blanc—quite close—with all the Aiguilles of her range, the Matterhorn, Monte Rosa, with the Bernese Oberland far away on one side, and the Alps Savoy on the other. We did not stay long at the top, but followed the Cornice down the other side, and presently Louis Fellay looked over what I had thought all the time was a sheer precipice, and said we will go down here. I said, "All right, but wait till I have put on my wings." But when I looked over there was a rock arrête going a good long way down to the valley—on the opposite side to Panossière. We went down this very slowly, some-

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times on the rocks and occasionally on snow. It took us about three hours to get down, and it could not have been more than 400 feet. Then some descending on very soft snow to the valley. Then about an hour uphill, along the valley, up to the Col de Sonadon. Here we had lunch, but the sun went in fast, as we wished, and it was very windy. My feet were wet through, and I found after about a quarter of an hour that I was sitting in a patch of snow, so I did not enjoy lunch as much as I might have. We then went on down a short slope on to an enormous glacier, or rather the centre of a valley where several glaciers met. The snow lay very deep. We went down this for about two hours, often having to go hundreds of yards to the right or left to escape crevasses, which were numerous. After another hour of ice we found ourselves at the foot of the glacier. We then had a long and very tiring walk down the moraine to the bottom of the valley, and another hour's very tedious pull up zig-zags to the Cabane de Chanrion. After a cup of tea I went to bed, very tired and slightly chilled.

On the way down the glacier and moraine there were numbers of blocks of lovely green stone; besides large boulders of creamy marble, also a lovely purple rock. In one of the green boulders there was a vein one and a half inches broad of talc or asbestos or something.

On the way up to the Cabane we saw two very fat marmots. I understand they are very fat now, as they will soon be hibernating, and they are laying in a store of fat, as bears do. Just before reaching the summit I put my leg through the snow into a crevasse, and barked my leg just underneath the knee.

Sep. 5th. Very bad weather at 5 o'clock, but started at 9. We went up and up. The flowers kept us—me

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—from being bored. I can't describe them now—too sleepy. We got on to the snow an hour and a half below the Col de Mont Rouge.

Sep. 6th. Arolla. I got up at four o'clock and started at five, after a comfortable breakfast and pipe, for the Petit Dent de Veisivi. The only way to climb is from a hotel; that cabane business is altogether too Spartan!

I had a very long tramp to get there, about four hours all up hill, and most of the time over enormous boulders, as Louis Fellay lost his way. At the foot of the rocks about 9 o'clock.

The weather was good, but there were white clouds in the valleys. The Petit Dent is a rock climb, but the lower rocks were very cold and slippery, with half an inch of fresh snow on them. After about an hour we got near the top peak; a place to get across, so we left our piolets.[1] How the guide got across I don't know, as there was no foothold; he had to pull himself up by his hands. One more place like that and we were at the top. We rested a bit, and then went down the other side, across an arrête, with a snow slope on one side and a sheer precipice on to the moraine of a small glacier on the other, and so on up the next peak; just before the top of which there is a very smooth slab of rock, up which even Louis had to be helped by Edouard, as there was not a hold of any sort. We rested a bit, and got back the same way. Rock climbing is very tiring for both the arms and legs, and very wearing to the seat of the trousers (inclusive). We rested again at the foot for an hour, and drank cold tea in a cup full of snow (very good). Then two hours to the foot of the valley, which were very tiring, and a

[1] *i.e.* ice-axes. A word in use at Champéry, probably *patois*.

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long plod of over an hour up the valley in the blazing sun.

When I got back I had a thirst I wouldn't have sold for a 'pony.' I ordered tea, and drank two lime juices and sodas while it was being got ready, and then about six cups of tea. The only way to climb (I say again) is from a hotel.

Sep. 7th, Sunday. I woke up to find it was 10.30, so had breakfast in bed! I had a bath, and then a very delicate shave, which took over half an hour, as my beard had to be moved practically hair by hair, and I was down punctually in time for dejeuner at 12.30! Good. Might as well be in time for something. In the afternoon the weather broke. I read and wrote two long letters, one to Charlie and one to Derek.

At 5.30 I went to Church, and prayed for fine weather: when I came out the rain had stopped. (The efficacy of prayer!)

In the evening I arranged with Edouard to do Mont Collon if it was fine, at 3 o'clock or even at 5 o'clock on Monday morning.

Sep. 8th, Monday. Woke up at 3, weather bad; woke at 4, weather bad; woke up at 5.30, weather still bad; didn't wake up again! I had another breakfast in bed, disgraceful! Had lunch at 12.30. In time for it again. Good!

After lunch we agreed to go up a small rock climb near the hotel. It was quite interesting; after we got up the first one we went along a rock arrête to the second—did not use a rope, as it was not very difficult, and it was better practice without. We got to the top at 4 o'clock. We rested for ten minutes, and when at the foot of the rock, ran the whole way back, so as not to be too late to have tea. I got back at 5.10, and had

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a good tea and a lime juice and soda. The latter I had to drink a bit faster than I really cared to, as the Bishop (he is of Sierra Leone, and a very good sportsman) and some others wanted our rope to climb a little rock a few yards from the hotel. I passed three quarters of an hour climbing up and down this and holding the rope for the others. I then had dinner, and am now just going to bed. I hope it will be fine enough to do Mont Collon to-morrow. It is quite easy, but rather long.

I saw tracks of about 30 chamois, but as some soldiers had passed before us, did not see any. We went over the Colde Mont Rouge, a very stiff pull up. Down a plain of snow, then down another glacier to the Pas de Chèvres, a short but fairly hard rock climb, then an hour and a half down the valley to Arolla. A hot bath, a decent suit of clothes, afternoon tea and dinner, sitting opposite a very amusing and interesting Colonial (?) Bishop. To-morrow all depends on the weather.

The men returned from their climbing, and spent a few days at Pélerin to compare notes. Eustace Strong and Seymour had been at Zermatt, and had done some interesting climbs, but to their chagrin, owing to very bad weather, had been obliged to give up the Matterhorn, the goal of their desires.

Marcus and Theodore Chambers, with Gervase, had been walking in the Chartreuse district and climbing in the Pelvoux Range.

Mrs. Theodore Chambers and Miss Evelyn Hare, with Roy, had been at Villars, and now all were gathering together at Mont Pélerin before dispersing for the winter. Mrs. Strong had also come out with her maid

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Dodd, and she and her grandchildren had thoroughly explored the interesting towns in the Gruyère district, whilst picnics and motor drives were the order of the day for all. The memory of those last happy summer holidays was to be a source of much comfort to the children in the trials to come.

Seymour wrote home from France in 1915, when in a particularly unpicturesque spot, that he had been trying to imagine that "a big slag-heap in the mist was really a mountain."

George left for London at the end of September, and he wrote to his mother saying how much he had enjoyed his stay.

September, 1913.
The Boat,
9 p.m.

It seems ages since I saw you this morning. It *is* a good time. The boat was an hour late at Boulogne, waiting for a train which finally emptied out three little girls and a very old man.

Please tell Rees that if it had not been for him and his getting my box registered, I should never have got my train. I read my French newspaper and novel the whole way to Paris, and at Paris I bought another French one, and have almost finished that. I expect I shall before I get to London. I have enjoyed my visit to Switzerland awfully, as I always do. The climbing was A1 and did me a lot of good.

I have just 'penned a line' to the 'Boss,' saying I will go to Frant to-morrow or Wednesday.

I had half an hour's conversation with a French engineer in the carriage. We saw a king-fisher out of the window, which he said was 'martin-pêcheur." It

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came into one of my books, and I should not have made out the sentence otherwise. . . . Please thank Nana for getting me up in time.

Henley House,
Frant.

I have been very bad about writing. . . . Last week-end I spent quietly at Hammerwood. I went to church in the evening and read the lessons. I went up a psalm too soon, otherwise I was all right.

The week-end before I spent also quietly with the Kekewichs'.

I think I am going to stay here this week-end. Hugh Tennant has come here to coach for the Home Civil, and a fellow called Hughes-Gibbs, who was up at Trinity while I was there, but I did not know him. Rita was looking very well at the wedding.

George had gone to his old friends at "Henley House" in order to obtain some final coaching for his examination at Christmas, 1913, about which he was very anxious, as so much of his future career depended on it.

Whilst George was at Henley House working, Seymour and his sisters Rita and Rosabel were with their mother and Miss Weber at Evian, opposite to Lausanne, where Marcus Chambers, who shared George's love of lonely ramblings, joined them after a solitary walking expedition.

Elfrida and Theodora had returned to England alone, as Rita had now left school.

The weather was bad at Evian; the hotel was about to shut up, and the waiters wished to get down to the Riviera hotels in good time, so they were very un-

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pleasant to the visitors in order to force them to leave. Also the country, which is extremely interesting, with its deep gorges, clothed at that time in autumn garb, was wrapt in mist, and the party were very glad to return to the sunny side of the lake, staying at the Hotel Byron before settling at Lausanne for the winter months.

Seymour returned to Cambridge, and Rita went with him in order to officiate as bridesmaid at the wedding of their cousin, James Elverson,[1] to Miss Jean Devitt, coming out again afterwards with "Nana," who had taken the younger children back to school. These journeys were a trial to everyone, but they taught the children an amount of independence which was invaluable to them when war conditions made it necessary for girls to take up work.

The event of the autumn was that Gervase Chambers,[2] who was cramming at Neuchâtel and who was spending the week-end at the Hotel Cecil, developed scarlet fever, and had to be removed to a "clinique," whilst his cousins had to be isolated in their flat. The boy had to be in quarantine all the Christmas holidays, but the Whidbornes were just safe when the time came to move for the school children's arrival.

Elfrida (only just recovered from chicken pox) and Theodora, Seymour and George met their mother at Montreux, and the last happy holidays were spent there.

Godfrey Buxton and Eustace Strong came out too, and Mr. and Mrs. Marcus Chambers joined them after travelling in Italy.

Winter sports were the order of the day, but as there

[1] Major James Elverson, R.F.A., invalided home after service in Egypt and France.

[2] Lieut. Gervase Chambers, 137 Siege Battery, R.G.A., B.E.F.

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was not enough snow for good ski-ing above Montreux, some of the party went up to Montana for a few days. These boys and girls, however, never liked to be long separated from their mother, and so they soon returned to the shores of the Lake of Geneva.

Another expedition was to their old hotel at Morgins. When on the way down they came in for the excitement of helping some peasants to remove their belongings from a burning châlet, which it was impossible to save in the deep snow. The great grief of the poor occupants so touched the happy boys and girls that all available pocket money was left behind.

George was very amusing over his first lessons in ski-ing, his brothers' and sisters' favourite sport, and did not at all like having to return to England at the beginning of January, being very nervous about the result of his examination.

He was always original, and his ideal for his future life at this time, if he failed in his exam., was "to go out to the Garden of Eden and plant potatoes." Mesopotamia was just then being talked of as a coming country for colonization. How little one realized then the important part it would play in this war!

"Thank you very much for your birthday letter. . . . I am in the midst of one of my heavy colds, and I have been having toothache. . . .

"Last week-end I went up to London; everybody had just returned from manœuvres, so things were very lively. I played golf with Cecil Gunston[1] at Stoke Poges; he gave me a stroke a hole, and I started two up. I beat him by five up and four holes still to play, so that was pretty good for me.

[1] Capt. Cecil Gunston, A.P.M., Coldstream Guards.

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"I saw Beckwith-Smith.[1] He said his people would ask me to stay a week-end with them; they live in Sussex, near the Gages.

"I also saw Lambton and Shaw-Stewart and Humphrey de Trafford, and several others whose names you might not know.

"The week-end before I stayed with Mrs. White at Rowfant, the Locker-Lampson's house. They are friends of Irene Gunston's, and she was there; also a Miss Palmer. . . ."

Prince Alexander of Battenburg was in this house-party, and a "woman" who "did Russian dances, which were not frightfully funny," also "a nice fellow called Wyndham," and a "Major Gaisford, who had been on the Staff in Egypt."

"I am not going to hunt until after my exam. I lost a box a week ago, with all my riding things and some boots. . . ."

Autumn, 1913,
The Guards Club.

To-morrow I start on my exam. . . . It is not actually a very important day, as it is only English, which I don't mind. Thursday is mathematics—my worst day.

1914,
About Jan. 10th.

I have arrived safely back, and the journey was not bad. . . .

I dined at the Hartopps, and heard lots of news.

[1] Capt. M. B. Beckwith-Smith, D.S.O., Brigade Major, 1st Guards Brigade. Mentioned in despatches three times. Wounded 4th October, 1914.

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Sylvia Streatfield is engaged to be married to a man called Sopwith. . . .

I chose Mollie Grenfell's and Stewart's wedding present to-day. I got an etching of Brangwyn's. . . .

London is what you would expect, drizzling and beastly. I start in half an hour for the Beckwith Smiths. I expect it will be great fun.

I have just had a telegram from Nellie Hozier (which was at my rooms) asking me to eat my Christmas dinner at the Admiralty!!! It came rather late! She may be staying at Glynde. P.S. Thank you for my stocking, which I loved.

Feb., 1914.

Bachelors' Club.

I had an awfully good time at the Beckwith Smiths. We danced in their house on Saturday—only till 12—amused ourselves quite well on Sunday. Shot on Monday. We got 95 pheasants and rabbits and ducks as well. We would have got many more, but it rained all day, also I felt very ill all day. . . . Luckily it was a house where it only caused sympathy and amusement and *not* awkwardness. In the evening I was better, and we went to the Lewes Bachelors' Ball. George Kekewich was there.

It was one of the nicest house-parties I have ever been in. All the people staying in the house were so nice. There was a fellow called Phipps, who is on the Royal Yacht. I can't describe how amusing he was, and how he enjoyed himself in the ball room.

Gibbs, who is in the Coldstream, was there, and another Coldstreamer, Lloyd, both very nice, and a boy of 19, named Leslie Melville, a brother of Lord Leven and Melville, who died last year from a hunting accident.

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A fellow called Hay, in the 19th Hussars, and George Freeman-Thomas, who is in the Coldstream too. . . .

Miss Sergison was there, who was up at the Dysarts at the party I was asked to. She told me they had been very sorry I could not come, and thought I had written a very nice letter to refuse! . . .

He had been asked to join so many charming house-parties for Christmas, that it had been quite a struggle to come out to Montreux, and his family much appreciated the effort.

Whilst staying at Charanté after his return to England he made his first appearance as a politician on a public platform at the Torquay Unionist Association meeting at the Strand Ward. The newspaper reports were: "Although it was his first speech, he made an excellent impression on the audience," and "Mr. Whidborne in an interesting speech proposed a hearty vote of thanks to the Ward officers."

He himself wrote:

Jan. 19th.

I have been down here since Thursday last, and leave to-morrow, Wednesday.

I had lunch with Col. Burn, the member, yesterday. In the evening I spoke at the Constitutional Club. There were only about a dozen people there, but it *was* an audience. I spoke, I should think, for ten minutes. To-night I am proposing a vote of thanks to Mr. Percy Harris, M.P. for South Paddington, at the Museum Hall.

It was a great pleasure to his aunts, one of whom wrote of this visit:

"George arrived on Thursday evening (needless to

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say he missed his train), and we are very much charmed with our nephew. He looks much better and he is a dear boy, and in spite of having grown up and having been so much about in the world, he is still curiously young and quite unspoiled. . . .

"He was talking yesterday about the Kikuyu affair (with a great deal of zeal and very little knowledge). I could not help being delighted to hear something that Ferris might have said coming out now and then in the middle of astounding statements of Church History and doctrine. . . .

"George has just been down to see Colonel Burn, and has come back to say 'I've completely spoiled the whole of my time here!'

"He had promised to go down to speak on Monday and Tuesday evenings at the meetings. Poor George —I feel we have rather let him in for it, but I do so very much wish to see him really working hard for something, and whether one enjoys politics or not, it seems to me unless English gentlemen take a hand in them, there is nothing to keep the country from going to destruction."

She also wrote in 1916 about his speech:

"People were very much struck by his little speech, and the ease with which he made himself heard. I remember how nervous he was beforehand, and we sat in the drawing-room after dinner wondering how he was getting on—and then we heard a step on the terrace, and there was George at the glass door, so delighted at having done well, and so eager to tell us all about it—dear boy."

During the same visit he had some lessons with an old French lady who took a great fancy to him, and

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hearing he liked letters when he was in France, she wrote to him in the autumn of the same year, after the war had begun. He answered her in French, which left something to be desired from the learned point of view, but which was very charming. He began—"It is a long time since I brought my little book to you for instruction, but I am still young!" There is pathos in this sentence. Madame Mosset felt his death much, and in a letter to his mother wrote: "The remembrance I had of him had something beyond what is the result of so short an acquaintance, for as a pupil he showed fully the character of a man with the highest motives. . . ."

March, 1914.
Bachelors' Club.

. . . I am going down to Windsor to-morrow to do a fortnight with the 2nd Battalion. I feel rather nervous. After that the idea is that I shall go over to Germany for a couple of months and try to pick up some German. I would go via Suisse, and stay a week or so on the way with you.

. . . I am staying with Eustace in his new flat. It is very nice, but the entrance is awful, as it is close to a butcher's shop, and the smell goes half way upstairs. . . .

. . . I have been down at Windsor doing a fortnight's training. We used to work very hard, parading every morning at 8.30 and coming back at 1.0, often going out again after dark for night operations.

I went out with the "Drag" twice. I got "the Major" down from Grantham, and he went so well, they made me put him in for the Regimental Point-to-Point. Unfortunately the very next time we went out I jumped a fence too much to the right and a bit too

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fast, which resulted in a 15 foot drop the other side into the road. Luckily I was not much hurt myself, but the unfortunate horse cut his knee to the bone, and won't be out again this season. I am very much upset, as I wanted to run him awfully in the point-to-point.

On Sunday I went over to Hammerwood, which was looking very pretty.

On Tuesday I was given a day's hunting with the Pytchley, one of the best I have had. . . ."

Bachelors' Club,
Piccadilly, W.,
Feb., 1914.

You will be glad to hear that I passed my exam. I heard the result yesterday, but was not quite sure, so I did not like to write and tell you.

Not only did I pass, but I came out, according to the marks, fourth out of ninety-seven.

In English History and Geography I got 1587 out of 2000, which was the best marks anybody got for any subject.

I find I may not go in for my next exam in March, but have to wait till October, as I have to have been in the Special Reserve eighteen months. This is a great bore, as I can't start cramming yet. Uncle Theodore suggests going to Germany to learn German.

George received the following letter from his tutor on passing his examination:

Henley House,
Frant,
Jan. 20th, 1914.

Heartiest congratulations on your pass and your excellent marks. I was quite pleased with Seldon's.

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250 odd for history, but yours are some 300 better. Those marks of yours would have got a fairly high place in the Sandhurst list.

He also wrote to Mrs. Whidborne:

"Did George tell you that he was very easily first in his English History, and fourth out of the forty odd men who passed?"

He had always loved the study of history, and could have excelled in that line if he had chosen. Napoleon is now one of Switzerland's great heroes, in spite of his treatment of that country, and the shops are filled with his statues and pictures. When at Montreux a discussion arose as to whether he was so great a hero as some of his admirers thought. George waxed eloquent on the subject, showing extensive knowledge of the history of the Napoleonic times, and speaking in quite an enthusiastic fashion. No doubt his military examinations had forced him to read up these periods, but his manner of talking was not that of a schoolboy, but of a man who had thought and made deductions for himself. He was so fond of keeping on the surface of things in his daily talk, that his mother especially noticed this occasion, as it showed his mental growth.

Letters from Theodore Chambers to his sister:

Jan. 21st, 1914.

A line to congratulate you on your eldest son's having passed so well. He is quite pleased, as you may imagine. It is rather a bore for him that he cannot go up for the next exam before October. I have advised him to learn German in the interim."

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Feb. 18th, 1914.

DEAREST MARGARET,

. . . George is still occupied with military matters in England. He is opening a debate at the Guards Club at Windsor. . . . He is *supporting* the Liberal Land Policy!!! Doesn't it make you smile? He was the only person who had the pluck to do it. It will be very good practice for him. . . . I am hard at work on my memorandum on the Housing Problem, and on my paper on the Rural Population. Oh, there is plenty to do.

His uncle was so keen on his own political career that he was very anxious to draw George into the interest of "affairs," but the boy was not inclined to take up a parliamentary life until he had seen more of the world at large, and had made up his mind that if he failed to get into the Coldstream Guards, he would seek his fortunes in another continent.

Theodore Chambers had at this time been asked to stand for Sutherland, and he hoped to have his nephew's help during the summer holidays in canvassing his constituency. No doubt George's winning manner would have influenced many votes.

Before the month of August was far advanced his voters were away in France, and the Great War had caused all ambitions to crumble into dust!

From his Uncle to George:

March 21, 1814,
8 North Street,
Westminster.

. . . How do you like the prospect of putting in some electioneering for me in Sutherland this autumn.

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Rather a nice county in summer and autumn, but ugh! in winter and spring.

Aunt Gina and I go down there to-morrow night, and I hope to be formally adopted (candidate) at the meeting on Tuesday. I have a lot of people coming down to help me. Colonel Burn has promised, and I am sure to get Pretyman and Royds and several of my personal friends. I think it will be great sport, even if I don't win it—but I mean to have a good try.

Things look very black at the moment. Churchill precipitated everything by his speech last Saturday. . . . The reports to-day are very serious, but I do not think there will be any conflict unless the Government try to disarm Ulster; then there will be a blaze, which, I believe, will extend to England. Anyhow I shall be glad to get into the arena whatever happens.

I went down to Torquay last night, was on the farm at 6 a.m., breakfasted at Charanté, and was back in London at 3.30 p.m. to-day.

George had been much interested in the Whidborne case *v.* Commissioners, which came on for hearing before the Referee. The following letter from Theodore Chambers to his sister explains the point at issue:

April 6, 1914.

. . . Let me remind you of the issue. It is a test case taken by the Land Union. The site value of a house on the Deptford Estate is agreed at £90. The question is how much of that value is due to the owner's having developed the estate. We claim £45. The Government allows £16. Finlay took the case for the Government, and we were before Cobb (as Referee), so it was all quite pleasant and much better than last time. The dramatic event was when the principal witness for

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the Government gave away the whole of the case, and put in a document which showed all we contended for. They might as well shut up and give us the case.

Later the case went to the Courts, and in due course a telegram arrived "Appeal dismissed, with costs against Commissioners."

In the meantime George had come out to Lausanne in unusually low spirits and not at all well.

He consulted a doctor, who advised his having some treatment for nasal catarrh. To the consternation of the operator, he fainted directly his nose was touched! He was much pulled down by this affair, and as he did not seem able to do much work (although his friend Lieut. A. W. G. Campbell,[1] who was staying at Lausanne, very kindly helped him with advice as to what course his studies should take), his mother arranged with him that he should go to Austria and travel over the ground of the Napoleonic campaigns. This he did most carefully, taking with him maps and making diagrams of the principal points to remember.

He wrote one of his diary-letters on this tour. These letters would as often as not consist of three or four sheets without beginning or end, which he put into an envelope and sent them as they were. In a few days would come another instalment, going on from the point where the other had left off.

Post-cards.

Zürich,
April 2nd, 1914.

Just walked round the town to get an idea of the country, and have come back to this hotel as I saw

[1] In the Coldstream Guards reserve—killed in action, Sept. 20, 1914.

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nothing exciting. Zürich, its lake and its mountains, are a very one horse affair after Lausanne, but then I had the most wonderful farewell to Lausanne, climbing up the hill behind through the vineyards, with all the tops of the mountains glittering and the lake melting into them without any dividing line.

Vienna, April 9th.

I have had an awfully good time here, and have been to Parsifal to-night. It is a wonderful piece. I have also seen some races that they don't have in England, with a jockey sitting on two wheels just behind the horse. I have thoroughly explored Vienna, and think it a delightful city, with really fine buildings. I go down the Danube to-morrow to Buda Pesth.

Ap. 10.
Buda Pesth.

I am very glad I came here; it is very beautiful. Splendid Parliament buildings, and an absolutely different country from Austria.

"I really do owe you a long letter. I will tell you all my wanderings. Zürich was a bit of a nonentity, and the shores of the lake too much built over; but I had a lovely journey there; and I had another lovely journey through the Tyrol on a beautiful sunny day to Innsbruck, where I had my first experience of Austrian officers. They looked very much like English officers I thought, which I hardly expected. Thank goodness, *we* do not have to wear uniform all day, anything more uncomfortable or expensive I can hardly imagine! The organisation of the army seems very much the same, though, of course, the 'Reserve' is much bigger and more efficient through conscription.

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"I should not much care to be stationed at Innsbruck, it is too much shut in by the mountains; very hot in summer I should think, and not very interesting; the church, with the exception of the statues, was to me void of any beauty, inside or out, and distinctly smelly and chilly. The journey next day was very long, but lovely and interesting, because till Salzburg we were either in the snow or very near it all the way; after Salzburg it got very interesting to me, because it got into my country,[1] and crossing through Lambach and Wels to Linz, I actually cut right across Napoleon's line of advance, and then followed it all the way to Vienna, passing a wonderful abbey, the Abbey of Melk, perched up on a rock overlooking the Danube, of which I got a wonderful first view, striking it full at a great sweep, just as the sun was going down.

"I arrived at Vienna, or Wien as I now call it, at a few minutes past eight, having left Innsbruck at 8 a.m. I got in some sleep in the afternoon in the train; so I was able to go straight to an hotel, not a very good one, but not too dear for Vienna; there I changed and sallied out to see life! The night amusements at Vienna are more organized than in London, or even in Paris, and consequently more expensive, so that a little goes a long way—into one's purse anyway.

"The next two days I spent seeing Vienna, which is a beautiful town, and which I think I know now better than London. The last day I went out and saw the races, and in the evening I heard Parsifal, which was very good, and for a very good seat I only paid 14 Kronen, and that was more than usual. As I found that a ticket to Buda-Pesth only cost 21 Kronen return, by the Danube, I went down there for two days; the

[1] That of the Napoleonic campaigns.

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journey down the Danube was not particularly interesting or beautiful, to me, and I slept most of the time!

"I am very glad I went to Pesth, as Hungary is quite a different country; even my one or two poor little German words did not help me."

Letter 2.

"To continue. I stayed two days in Pesth at a pension for ten francs a day. I went all over the Palace, which is upon a great cliff over-looking the Danube and the city, and which is magnificent inside and out. It is funny that all the time I was at Windsor I never went into the Castle once. I also went over the picture gallery and a modern sort of Royal Academy with *very* good paintings.

"There is one very long straight boulevard, with a broad street and trees, and then smaller streets and pavements, which run straight through the city for over one and a half miles.

"All the shop-signs are in Hungarian, with dashes over the vowels and impossible to pronounce, so that even common things like trams, which one can always spot, even in an unknown country, are unrecognisable.

"I came back up the Danube by night; leaving the city, the lights reflected in the water were very fine, and showers of sparks were thrown up like thousands of rockets by some engines, which were helping to make a bridge across the river. The cabin was so stuffy (I had only paid two Kronen for it, so you couldn't expect much) that I woke up at day-break and went up on deck and saw the morning coming; the river white as glass, and very calm, and all the woods and banks dark and heavy. I took my clothes on deck and slept there

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an hour or so, but it got cold and I went down and slept again till late.

"The next morning I started early for Brünn, crossing the Donau by the Florisdorf bridge, which Murat captured by a very mean—what he called 'ruse de guerre,' but what we called in South Africa 'an abuse of the white flag.'

"The same evening, Cook's agent, an Austrian reserve officer, Herr Neisser, of Brünn, with whom I had made friends, took me out in a taxi to the battlefield and showed me the lie of the land and the general idea of a battle. The expedition cost 30 Kronen, but it was worth it, as I could never have explored it so thoroughly by myself. He also lent me a very minute military map, which was invaluable to me.

"The same evening I hired a bicycle for five Kronen a day for two days. The next morning I got up early, but owing to buying provisions I did not actually get out of Brünn till 9 o'clock. I bicycled along the Brünn road, Olmütz road for about six miles (this is the northern boundary of the battlefield), getting off now and then to look at the country—till I got to a little hill or conical mound called by Napoleon's troops 'Santon,' as it was like one of that name they had come across in the Egyptian campaign—and now called 'Napoleon's Huegel.' Up this I carried my bicycle, which was very hard work, but I was afraid to leave it by the roadside in case it might be stolen. From this hill 'Nap' directed the counter-attack, so I got a good view and idea of things from there. I stayed there for nearly an hour, and nearly went to sleep. It was a lovely spring day, and as warm as summer. The country is wide and undulating, practically no cover in the shape of trees, but with plenty of folds in the ground to hide

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troops; not very beautiful, but with red earth like Devonshire, with young very green corn coming up everywhere. After getting my bike down from Napoleon's 'Huegel,' which was nearly as hard work as getting it up, I had my 'ADVENTURE.' I saw some smoke pouring out of a little village on my right. I thought 'this is very interesting, obviously a factory,' but while I was wondering, from an economic point of view, how it paid them to produce there, with no visible means of transport, I came to the conclusion that this fire was of no pre-arranged or intended nature: so pushing my bike over stones for nearly a quarter of a mile, I entered the village to find one of the cottages blazing, and a woman, bare-footed, in floods of tears, the men hastily pulling things out of the two nearest cottages. Leaving my bicycle in the village shop, I nobly joined in the work of rescue, and in spite of the intense heat and showers of falling tiles, I entered the burning house to rescue fair damsels! Not finding any damsels, I helped first to pull up a huge wooden door, and then returned for a mattress; but in helping to pull a wagon out of the inner court I got such a crack on my nose and eye with the shaft, which caught against the door, that I was knocked out—on the bad side of my nose too. I thought my skull was cracked. Feeling very sick and faint, I stood giddily in the doorway for a moment or two till the falling roof brought me to my senses, and I crawled into the little pub next door, where I had left my bike. At this point the village fire brigade, all wearing helmets, none of which matched, and a sort of pyjama jacket over their ordinary clothes, turned up and were very important. They had a bit of a squabble as to which should hold the hose, and one of them finally got it; not that it was of any use to him, as no water

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would come out of it, at least a trickle came out, which he held up in the air as a Cupid does a conch shell on a municipal fountain, but none of the water reached the fire. At this point I retired to the pub again, as I thought I should faint. You know how good I am at that! When I came to, I found the 'pub' full of the fire brigade and other heroic rescuers drinking for all they were worth. 'That is all right, the fire is mastered and all is safe,' I thought; but no, on looking out I found the fire still burning merrily, in spite of at least thirty firemen from neighbouring villages—one a very nutty corps, all with uniform helmets—and about four or five trumpeters and buglers, all blowing hard—I suppose the 'Cease fire,'—not that it did much good."

Saltzburg.

I think I was telling you about the new batch of firemen that turned up. After a bit I thought I might safely leave the fire in their hands. I thought at first I should have to get back to Brünn as best I could; but feeling a bit better, determined to finish my trip. So I bicycled out of the village, and on to Austerlitz, about six miles further on, without excitement. It was about two o'clock, or a bit past. I had tea (!), a glass of beer and some cold hard boiled eggs and an orange I had taken with me at Austerlitz, and then started back two or three miles in the cool of the evening to Krenoirtz, where the Russian general gave his orders the night before the battle; then to Pratze, a little village on the slope of the Pratzen heights, which is the centre of the battle, and through which the French made their counter attack. This, the return journey, was about three miles on the worst possible roads, cart-tracks I should call them, very stony and rutty, and the hired bicycle had

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very, very low handle bars, no brakes except a back-pedalling one, and it was a very hot day. From Bratze to Kobelnitz I turned sharply to the left hand in order to follow the line of the little river, the Goldbach, which was the French line of defence, then Jirigovitz, Puntovitz, Kobelnitz, Sokolnitz, Telnitz and Menitz, with Aujede a mile in front. I spell these names from memory, so that they may not be right; especially the first one.

I passed a 'Schloss' with what is called a 'Fasan garten,' which had been 'occupied' by the French: besides the pheasants I saw numbers of partridges and hares in the fields.

At Telnitz I had the good fortune to see a service in the churchyard. All the men (not very many of them) in black on one side of the churchyard, and on the other a crowd of peasant women in their very best dresses, with any number of babies and small children. The best dresses of these good ladies are exactly the latest fashion, tight or slit skirts; the old ones have them of velvet or plush, and the young ones of silk or satin. The skirt and jacket are of one colour, very bright: the old ones have them dark red or mulberry or green, and the young ones have them of bright blue or pink or light green: they also have aprons of another bright colour. Their everyday skirts stand out from them like a crinoline, and look as if they had 30 or 40 petticoats underneath them. They are very short, and disclose not always remarkably slim ankles, and a rather ungainly sort of snowboot. . . . From Telnitz to Turas was about five miles, and then I had another five miles to Brünn, the lights of the town cheering me up when I first saw them, but keeping their distance all too well.

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A weary half mile walk over cobbles, and then a walk through the town, pushing the bike, as I had no lamp. Finally I had a good dinner at 9.30, and went to bed, almost too tired to sleep. My face was quite unrecognisable in the glass, it was so swollen, but I do not think the bone is broken. The eye developed next day into a black one, and the other has since gone into half-mourning out of sympathy! Moreover, the scab of the cut has come off, and I don't think it will leave any mark. I go into full details because I know that you always like to know all the intricacies of my troubles!

The next day I got up late, being very stiff, and my hands and arms very sore. I had been about 40 miles or about 55 kilometres the day before, I think. Anyway I did not start out to Turas until after lunch, and then I went to Schleppanitz, from the hill behind which I did a sketch in pen and ink of the battlefield, which, if not an artistic success, will serve very well to remind me of the lie of the land, not that I shall need much reminding for many a day I think.

I went only about fifteen miles, and came back at full pace to avoid a thunder-storm. The next day I caught an early train back to Vienna, meaning to go on the same day to Salzburg, but the fates were against me. It was Bank Holiday, and Cook's, from whom I had to get my ticket, was closed, so I had to wait till next day, missing the good morning train, because Cook's did not open till nine and it left at 9.25, and catching a rotten slow one, 3.45, which got me in here 11.20 p.m. Last night I slept at the Hotel de l'Europe, and woke up to find heavy snow falling.

Yesterday was so hot that we had travelled with every window in the train open. There were some very nice little boys, perhaps fifty or sixty, the youngest

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ones only eight or nine years old, going back to a military school at Ems. They looked so minute in their little uniforms, like doll officers; some of the little ones cried at leaving, in spite of their uniforms.

April 18, 1914,
Munich.

Munich has been very nice in a quiet way, though there has been some excitement in that three distinguished visitors have been here this week: the Crown Prince of Austria, the Grand Duke (Hereditary, mind you) of Baden, and modesty forbids my mentioning the third! Yesterday I went by train to the Starnberger See, a really lovely lake, with very bright blue water and very white mountains. In the evening I went to a German play. An actress called Tilla Darieux was playing, who was really first-class—as good as you could have. There are very good pictures here, as you know, but I could not find the one which makes you shut your eyes[1]—indeed I thought they were very harmless. The Armee Museum is the best thing here, and the Frauen Kirche is good. I don't like the Palace. Salzburg was in a snowstorm the whole time I was there, so my impression is not very good. I hated the big Church there, but there was a delightful little old half-Roman, half-Gothic Church called St. Peter's quite close.

Munich.

I am now getting nearer and nearer to England. I think I shall skip from here to Mainz, except for Ulm,

[1] His mother had been to a modern picture gallery at Munich, in which there were some rather "risqué" pictures, and she had heard an old American woman say to her husband, "I shouldn't like to have a picture in my drawing-room that made you have to shut your eyes every time you wanted to look at it."

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and get a day or two in Holland. It attracts me more, as I believe the tulips are out now.

Ulm,
21 April.

This is the highest spire in the world, and I have just been to the top of it. I left Munich at eight this morning, and arrived here 10-30. I left my luggage at an hotel, and caught another train to Elchingen. I walked round the scene of action, did a sketch and came back here at 4 p.m. I walked round the town, and up the tower, never again! I am very tired, and my nose is rather a trouble. I am afraid I broke it the other day, as when the swelling went down it was very crooked, and I spent a whole morning pressing it back with some success!

Hilligom,
April 25.

I am on my way, walking from Leyden to Haarlem. I am exactly half way, having walked thirteen miles. I am having some coffee to buck me up. I am staying at the Hague at a very nice hotel. I shall be back in England in about four days, but I am going to Amsterdam first.

Holland,
April, 1914.

This last has been the best part of my whole time. I am so glad I came to Holland. I will tell you about it. After the Rhine, which would be all right in your own boat, I came, as I couldn't very well help coming, to 'Köln.' The boat was crowded with the rather commoner sort of tourists of every nationality. I talked to some Americans and Canadians, and stayed

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one day at the same hotel at Köln, but I soon preferred to be alone again.

The Cathedral at Cologne is wonderful. I also went to the Zoo. The evening we spent at a funny little German Opera called 'Die Weisse Dame,' which was about Scotland. The clothes were so funny, but it was quite amusing. At Mainz I had seen Siegfried, which was very good, especially the dwarf and the dragon. The dragon singing was lovely.

From Cologne to the Hague: I arrived in a rain storm, and the rain sweeping across the broad levels was fine, all the black and white cows turning their backs to the storm.

The Hague is a delightful Dutch town, very broad and leafy and clean. The next day, as you know, I went to Leyden, and missing the steam tram to Haarlem, I walked 27 kilometres, and was very glad to get there.

My last day at Den Haag was very lucky; strolling in a wood by the town, I came to what was obviously a Palace, with an orange flag flying. I saw several people looking into the garden across the Dyke. I asked a policeman and he said the 'Koenigin Wilhelmina' was walking in the garden. Sure enough, in about two minutes a little short, rather fat woman, very badly dressed in a brown tailor-made coat and skirt (skirt short) and mushroom hat and cheap-looking stole came striding down the garden path, about twenty yards away. I raised my cap with due reverence, though I thought the good lady's looks more like a suffragette than a queen. Then, best luck of all, a little child appeared on a balcony, and danced down the steps and along the path, turning round and smiling at her governess and then running on and jumping in the air like a kid,

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utterly oblivious of the crowd of loyal subjects. Presently she joined her mother. It was rather like looking at an ants' nest through the side of a glass case, as I did at Cologne.

The next day to Amsterdam, which I soon left, and came here, which is on the Zuyder Zee. It is a big fishing village, and everyone wears Dutch clothes. It is delightful, and the people are so nice. I really ought to go back to England, but I can't tear myself away.

Volendam,
Holland,
April, 1914.

I left Amsterdam the very next morning. I took a launch across the strip of water which separates Amsterdam from what is called 'North Holland.' The bridges were so low that you had to duck your head, or it would be knocked off. Then I went by steam-tram, through the 'Waterland' to Monickadam, one of the 'Dead Cities' of the Zuyder Zee, to 'Edam,' which is another dead city. When Holland was mistress of the seas, and ships were smaller, all these towns of the Zuyder Zee were important ship-building ports, and when ships grew larger, they could no longer navigate the very shallow waters of the Zuyder Zee, and these towns were, so to speak, 'scrapped.'

They are beautifully built, large, pleasant houses, with paved paths, and avenues and canals in the centre of each street. From Edam, on a lovely evening, I went three miles in a barge to Volendam on the sea, and came to this very pleasant hotel. Every artist you can think of has been here and left a sketch or a picture. Phil May, Tom Browne, Burne Jones, Stanhope Forbes, Mortimer Mempes, Clausen, and hundreds of others,

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so that it is a picture gallery worth looking at! There are numerous duck-pens round about, many of them actually in the village. The ducks are fed partly on maize, but mostly on dead, very dead fish; so that at feeding time, when the wind is in the right direction, we get a good share of the smell at least of the ducks' dinner. There are said to be 200,000 ducks here. Their eggs go to England to Huntley and Palmer's, and other biscuit manufacturers. When the ducks get too old to lay eggs, but won't die, they are sent to Germany, where they become part of the rations of the German army. No wonder they are a tough lot!

Yesterday I went by the nine o'clock steam-tram to Pulmerand, where there was a great cheese-market. Thousands of bright golden cheeses, looking like piles of giant oranges of every shade of orange, and numbers of black and white cattle, also, I am sorry to say, everywhere piles of stiff little baby calves just killed for veal, also a very weedy moth-eaten collection of horses and ponies being sold by Jew dealers. It was interesting to watch the Dutch farmers sailing away from the market down the canals, the barges low in the water, a fat wife at the rudder, cattle below hatches, a pen above them with calves, pigs, and piles of new farm implements and casks of beer heaped up everywhere.

In the afternoon I went over to the Island of Marken; the people wear quite different clothes, and are not nearly so nice; all the children beg. This morning I was wakened at five o'clock by the sun bursting up over the Zuyder Zee. I went out on to my balcony; the fisher folk were just beginning to appear, and soon the fishing fleet appeared on the horizon, making for the harbour, as they had had a catch over night. They came in between me and the sun (I could see them

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beautifully from my bed), two or three at a time, black against the bright blue sky and sea. I then went to sleep again for another hour or so!!

I ought to go back to London, just think of it! But I can't go till to-morrow. It is so hot here I needn't wear a hard collar, and I bathed in the Zuyder Zee. It will be hot in London (if it doesn't rain). I shall have to wear a stiff collar. . . .

I succumb to the atmosphere of the place this afternoon; I shall attempt a sketch. I don't know what will come of it, and I shall keep very quiet about it, as everyone is very artistic. There is an awful American woman here, who is always talking about her 'art'; no one has ever seen any of it—I don't think they want to! They were very much surprised that I wasn't an artist.

Whilst George was on his Austrian tour, his brother Seymour was ski-ing in Norway, staying at the same hotel as the young Prince of Wales, whom he reported as indefatigable in pursuit of sport!

Charlie was on his way home from India, looking forward to his much-longed-for furlough, and the girls were at Lausanne with their mother, who was with some regret making preparations for leaving Switzerland, though looking forward to a happy reunion of the family at Hammerwood.

They left Lausanne in the motor with "Nana," and after failing to cross the Col de la Faucille owing to the deep snow, crossed the frontier at Bellegarde, little dreaming of what the future had in store.

On the return journey they motored to Vichy by way of Nantua and Lyons, and thus saw a part of France which was, on the whole, extremely interesting, but in some parts the roads were monotonous, and must

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have wearied those who travelled by carriage in days gone by.

At Vichy they were joined by Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Strong, who much enjoyed the long drives with their grandchildren through the beautiful Auvergne district in its spring garb. Charlie, who arrived home from India just then, landed at Marseilles, and coming straight to Vichy, shared in the enjoyment of the mountain roads, lined with fruit trees in blossom, under which girls in bright blue dresses were minding little pink pigs! The gorse, too, made the hill-sides brilliant, and the woods were full of lilies of the valley. It is impossible to realise without a motor that the ugly town of Vichy has such lovely surroundings.

Still more did the traveller from India revel in the homeward journey through France, which Charlie and Rita took alone with their mother. It was glorious May time. The long French roads were lined with acacias in bloom, and the ubiquitous apple trees were in the height of their flowering.

They had settled to make a detour and visit the Châteaux of the Loire district. France looked its best, and as the happy little party thought of the history of the past, with its cruelties and its terrors, they congratulated themselves that the time for such horrors was—as they thought—past. Even when they crossed bridges over the Loire, which had been destroyed in 1870 and had been rebuilt stronger and firmer than ever, they remarked to each other that "such things would not be possible now!" They picnicked in beautiful forests or by cool refreshing rivers or in meadows of buttercups and daisies; they admired the peasants going to market together, man and wife in their neat little carts; they revelled in castles and cathedrals, and when their mother

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was unable to walk to see a sight, the motor was drawn up in some peaceful spot and the boy and girl went off by themselves, returning as speedily as possible to recount to their mother the things that they had seen, or perhaps having arranged some way by which she could see them too, for they were never quite happy unless she were with them.

In the morning they bought nice fresh butter and bread and other provisions for the picnics, always including fruit, for the son from India had a longing for its cool taste, and the saunters down the streets of the little towns were not the least of the enjoyments of that perfect time.

Tours and Blois were the chief headquarters, but the heat was almost too much at the latter place, and they welcomed the shade of Fontainebleau, where they spent a delightful Sunday in a hotel like a large country house. They economised in small ways, and enjoyed themselves when they arrived in places where it was necessary to spend money.

The palace of Fontainebleau, with its acres of forest, was like Fairyland, but there was a large garrison hidden there, and one day, out of a woodland glade, there rode in single file a regiment of picturesquely uniformed French soldiers. It was difficult on that day to realise that they were there for anything else but a scenic effect!

There were garrisons everywhere, and the soldiers looked very smart.

At Versailles the travellers again spent a charming day and night in another fairy palace hotel, which when the war began a wise English officer, seeking for a hospital for his men near Paris, chose on account of its ideal surroundings. It was the Trianon Palace Hotel,

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close to the woods of the real Palace, which has such associations for the lovers of past history.

The only adventures they met with were due to the propensity of French horses to run away; once they had a narrow escape from one of these runaways which was drawing a load of wood, whilst another time a driverless steed was coming straight at the motor, and only changed its mind at the last moment, swerving on one side just in time to avoid injuring the Napier!

At Beauvais, where they saw the wonderful tapestry manufactory, the weather changed, and at Amiens it rained and became so cold that they were not sorry when the chauffeur told them that they must hurry on in order to get the car across the Channel to England before the Whitsuntide rush. And the motor did hurry past Montreuil and Etaples, bringing back to the children thoughts of the summer holidays they used to spend there, and then on to Boulogne, where they stayed in an hotel, now too a hospital.

When Charlie revisited the same parts not four months later, the unthinkable had taken place, and poor, gay France was in the throes of a war that everyone had hoped would be impossible.

Meantime George had been in London enjoying the season's rush.

He wrote:

". . . I have been back in England a week now. Directly I arrived back from my trip, for which I thank you very, very much, I found that they wanted me to go down to Pirbright to do a week's musketry, as Campbell was doing his course that week. So off I went, and came up to several balls. On Monday I motored over in the afternoon and had dinner with

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Campbell and Lady Moya in their cottage near Windsor, and motored back the same night.

"On Tuesday I went with Towers Clark, an officer in the Coldstream, to fill a gap at a certain Mrs. Arbuthnot's dinner party. I sat next to a Miss Frewen, . . ."

His description of the conversation at this dinner is amusing, but he departed from his usual discreetness in retailing it, and it is wiser not to record it.

"On Thursday I dined with the De Lisles at the Ritz for Lady Clifden's ball. You remember I went and shot at Wimpole, the Clifden's place near Cambridge, with Cecil Agar-Robartes. I saw him, and he told me that he and Seymour had been having whippet races out at Wimpole.

"On Friday night I had dinner with Mrs. Tom Wood, who was a Tollemache, and we went to a Mrs. Devereux' ball at the Ritz. I had to catch the 12.15 train to Pirbright, as I had to be on the range at *five* the next morning.

"On Thursday night I danced several times with . . . and . . . who was looking very beautiful, and whom I had the great pleasure of having supper with. I am sorry to say I felt just the same!"

The season before the war was a very gay one, but in the minds of the more thoughtful people there was a feeling of unrest in the air, and, politically, the state of Ireland was causing the greatest anxiety.

George was, however, untroubled by prognostications; nor indeed did the excitements of the London season allow much leisure for thought, for never had there been a time when the pleasure of young people had been more thought of, and numerous "boy and

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girl dances" took place. "Dancing men" would receive as many as ten or twelve invitations for one evening, and sometimes they were sent out several months before the date of the party.

George once complained that people thought it rude if their invitations were not acknowledged, but it meant spending hours in answering them, and as he was trying to "cram" at the same time, he found life fairly arduous. He said afterwards that it really helped him during the war, as he had got into the habit of sleeping whenever he got the chance! He was very much pleased to have his home open to him again, although he had so many delightful invitations that he found it difficult to get there very often, and was continually wishing he could be in two places at once. He wrote:

"I do hope you are still feeling better, and that you are happy at Hammerwood. I had a very nice week-end, and went to Church on Sunday morning. I was staying with a very nice person, Mrs. Grenfell, in Hertfordshire, and next Sunday I am going to Winchester to stay with an old friend. She was Mollie Grenfell, a daughter of my last week's hostess, who married Walter Stewart in the Rifle Brigade.

"I shall miss not being at Hammerwood, but hope to get down for an odd night next week.

"I hope Rita enjoyed Cambridge. . . . I saw Cousin Ethel at Ascot to-day. . . . I am doing the same thing, going to my crammer in the morning, and dancing in the evening.

"On Monday last I had dinner with the Brasseys. I sat next to Lady Brassey, who is a keen Suffragette. I argued the whole way from the fish till the end of the dinner! She thought you must be a very nice and

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clever person. I only talked during the soup to my next-door neighbour, a Miss Lyttelton, who had been in the Victoria Falls Hotel with me!

"We went on to Lady Brownlow's dance in Carlton House Terrace. I was introduced to another Miss Tennant."

He then went on to name the girls he danced with, as he generally did when he had enjoyed a ball very much.

He was so tired that he went to bed "at five o'clock and slept till ten, when I felt quite well again."

"Wednesday I went to the Peace Ball, and enjoyed it very much. . . . On Thursday to Lady Barrington's, and enjoyed it immensely. I danced with a very good dancer, Eileen Knox, and also Vita Pery, both of them great aeroplanists when Hamel was alive.

"On Friday I went to Lady Glenconner's, and danced with Nellie Hozier, who was looking very pretty, and danced very well. . . . I am not dancing this week, as I work in the evening."

He went to the German Embassy with his friend Count Arco, and helped to alarm the Lichnovskys about the state of Ulster, as at the time it was feared that the army might be ordered to take up arms against the Irishmen there.

The Ambassador had been sent to London whilst Mrs. Whidborne was at the Sanatorium at Baden-Baden, and there had been a good deal of talk about the appointment. It was then reported that he was sent over to create a better feeling between England and Germany, and, being very popular in London, it certainly looked as if he had attained this result. Un-

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fortunately, however, being friendly with the party who thought that at any moment a conflagration might break out in Ireland, he, to his own undoing, advised the German Emperor (so it was said) that the condition of matters in England would keep her out of the war.

Just after the Naval Review at Spithead Theodore Chambers went over to Ireland to study the Irish position on the spot, so that he might have the latest information for his campaign in the North, which he expected to undertake in August, when he hoped to have George's help in canvassing his constituency.

He was in Belfast while the Conference sat at Buckingham Palace trying to find a "way out," and was in the Belfast Club when the news came through that compromise had been found impossible. He was in Derry when the Howth gun-running incident led to trouble in Dublin and when the news was received that Austria had declared war on Servia, and it was realised that Europe was on the verge of something very much bigger than the Irish question.

During his tour he visited Dublin, Waterford, Enniscorthy, Cork, Athlone, Belfast, Derry and Dungannon. He saw rifles being brought into Belfast and stored under the eyes of the authorities. He attended drills and manœuvres of the Ulster Volunteers in various parts of the north. The country was in a condition of serious unrest. Trouble was expected at any moment. Elaborate preparations were being made for the care of the refugees and for supplies for the troops. The most rigid discipline existed throughout the province, and the rank and file had unlimited faith and belief in their leaders. But the risks were tremendous. An ill-advised premature movement—a shot fired in malice or in panic—and the flames of civil war would have spread

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rapidly through the country. There were not only rifles in the hands of the Volunteers in those days, but plenty of ammunition. Any accident might have precipitated a general conflict. This was the state of Ireland in July, 1914, when the declaration of war between the great Powers of Europe turned the limelight on to other spheres. Interest in Irish affairs ceased suddenly. Newspaper reporters who had taken up their residence in Ulster to watch and report local incidents flocked back to London, and the situation in Ireland was immediately transformed.

This period of Irish unrest is so intimately associated with the European war, and Germany's miscalculation that the Irish imbroglio would so tie our hands as to prevent our meeting the claims of our Continental Allies was so serious to them that it may be worth while to record a few first-hand impressions of the Irish conditions taken from contemporary notes and letters written by Mr. Chambers.

What struck him most forcibly was the radical racial differences between the people of the North and those of the South. The religious aspect of the question, important as it is to some persons and in some localities, did not appear to him to be the fundamental cause of the antagonism of the North to Home Rule. He met many Protestant Home Rulers and some Catholic Unionists. The real difference between the North and South was something deeper than their religious beliefs. The people have maintained their inherited faiths, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant, because such faiths are consistent with their racial characteristics. The Southern and Western people appeared generally to be a pleasant, leisure-loving, essentially unpractical people—fond of talking much but accomplishing little.

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Careless and usually improvident. Very happy-go-lucky and easy going until roused by sentiment—in short, charming but unreliable.

Parts of Dublin in 1914 were characteristic of careless indifference to important matters. Beautiful eighteenth century houses, the mansions of the Dublin nobility of that day, had been permitted to drift into becoming slum tenements of the vilest kind, and no one cared to apply any remedy, although these were ready to hand. The Dublin Housing enquiry, held in the spring of 1914, showed how apathetic the authorities were toward such sorry conditions. Throughout the South there was a general air of neglectfulness and contentment with inferior conditions. Roads were badly repaired. Sign-posts rarely existed. Hotels were poor and dirty. No one seemed to mind any of these shortcomings. The attitude towards Home Rule in the South was one of apathy and indifference in most cases. The general opinion of the people seemed to be that they hoped that it might bring good times and plenty of money, without their having to work too hard for it—but it did not appear that they were really very keen about it. In the North the people were of a very different type. Dour and cold, practical and hard-headed. Not nearly so pleasant to pass the time of day with, but full of shrewd commonsense and business ability. Calm and unemotional: led by their heads rather than by their hearts; in short, very sound, but not so pleasant to talk to as the people of the South. In Belfast he found level-headed Ulster Scots, merchants and business men devoting their days to the affairs of trade and their nights to playing the game of embryo rebel under the very eyes of the authorities. In Belfast lay the real practical strength of the resistance to Home

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Rule. Here the threatened revolt was led and guided by men of means and position—men of few words, but intensely in earnest. The religious aspect of the question did not loom as large in Belfast as it did further west. Here it was a question of business prudence. Belfast men of affairs were not prepared to see the reins of Government pass into the hands of a race foreign to themselves in temperament and habit. They were afraid of being controlled by the politicians of the South. They saw the downfall of the magnificent trade they had built for themselves if the government passed to those who had never shown any capacity for self-government on even the smallest scale. It was this side of the Ulster question that gave strength to the watchword, the "Exclusion of Ulster." It was here that lay the power effectively to threaten rebellion if the government included Ulster. Whatever happened, the Irish Parliament should not control Belfast. Without the money of Belfast and the organising ability of Belfast men, Ulster could never have organised the show of armed resistance which she threatened definitely to use if any attempt at coercion were made by the government.

At the same time the religious aspect of the question provided a strong force in the hands of the exclusionists. The Ulster Volunteers were largely composed of men with strong religious convictions and possessed of a bitter hostility to Rome. In the rural districts the campaign for the exclusion of Ulster had all the form of a fervent spiritual crusade. Ministers preached armed resistance from the pulpit and impressed upon congregations of Volunteers that theirs was a holy cause, for which they would be justified in sacrificing their lives. The combination of business organising power and

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religious fervour was a powerful force, which the leaders knew well how to use and control, and admirably it was controlled through the dangerous and difficult weeks before the war. Materially speaking, the clash of arms in Europe saved Ireland from civil war. How near we were to the brink of civil war can only be known to those who lived through those days in Ireland.

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CHAPTER VI

THE GREAT WAR

UNDER ORDERS—LETTERS FROM THE FRONT—THE MILITARY CROSS—LETTERS FROM FRIENDS

CHILDREN will ask in years to come "What was the cause of the great war? What was it all about?"

There have been many definitions of our reasons for fighting, but no one can ever get away from the facts that the Germans began the war, and that we had done everything we could to show that we wanted peace. We are sacrificing thousands of lives for a high ideal.

This is a war about broken contracts. Covenants are sacred things, instituted by God Himself, and they cannot be broken with impunity. Force is not everything.

It was a sad blow to the great peace party in England and America when the flames of war burst forth. For years the spirit of Universal Peace had been hovering over the universe.

Only in 1913 had an American magazine published a number of articles by distinguished men showing that a European war had become impossible, only one out of the whole number who had been asked to write—differing. But nothing is impossible, and man has again and again to learn that he knows little about the great forces which govern this earth.

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PHOTOGRAPH BY LAFAYETTE

GEORGE FERRIS WHIDBORNE
AUGUST 1914

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Sir Edward Fry, our representative at the Hague conferences, expressed the feeling of a large body of people in the following letter to Mrs. Whidborne:

Failand House,
31/VIII/1914.

". . . To myself, as to almost everybody, this war has come as a terrible grief. The schemes for conciliation, mediation and arbitration which have done something for Europe, and which we hoped might in time take the place of an appeal to arms, are all torn up, thrown into the waste-paper basket of Europe, and the appeal has been made to mere brute force. But if in the end the black cloud of military ambition which has so long hung over Europe should be dispelled, we shall feel that out of the misery of the war a great blessing has emerged.

At the end of July, as George had been rather tired and Charlie was still at home on furlough, they had settled to go out to Switzerland and climb together. They had a pleasant ten days, making their headquarters at Arolla, as will be seen from the following letter, written by Charlie to George in March, 1915:

"I was awfully glad to get your letter the other day and to hear you had the Swiss photographs. I wish the snow ones had been a bit clearer. I think I overexposed them all, but they are all right for us, as we know what it was really like—that last climb we did. I shall never forget that. The one of you just at the top, I am afraid, does not give a very good idea of the tremendous danger you were in—I expect you are getting fairly used to danger now!

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"I do hope you got your leave all right. I am sure you must deserve it. I unfortunately have missed mine owing to leave being stopped.

"I am doing a machine gun course here, lasting a fortnight; it is pretty hard work, as we are at it practically from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

"Last Sunday I got half a day off, and motored to Boulogne by way of something to do, and had a good dinner and a good bath, both of which you cannot get here.

"I like the photograph of the Dent Blanche and the Matterhorn. I wish we had managed the latter. I think we should have if it had not been for the beastly Germans.

"What amused me most was about missing that diligence at Sion; how we missed two of them and then spent the morning in that café, cursing the snow, which was low. I have scarcely seen you since then. We must have another go together after this show is over. I expect you heard that Eustace went out and brought all our things back."

When the first rumblings of the thunder of war were heard through Europe the pleasure places abroad were crowded with travellers, though fortunately the summer holidays had scarcely begun. When the storm broke, these people, even in the neutral countries, were unable to return home for some time owing to the mobilization, but George and Charlie, on stating that they were English officers, were allowed to set off, leaving their luggage behind at Lausanne.

After the declaration of war between Germany and Russia on August 3rd, their mother had telegraphed to Arolla for them to return.

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The answer, saying that they had left, reached England a fortnight later. The following interesting account of their adventures was compiled by Eustace Strong from Charlie's description of their adventures on this journey:

Journey from Arolla to Newhaven,
August, 1914.

After hearing on Friday night, July 31st, that a Woolwich cadet had been called back by telegram, we considered the advisability of our immediate return. No further news coming, we did a climb on Saturday; returning to Arolla on Saturday afternoon, we learnt that the situation was more serious, and our two guides were called off for the Swiss mobilization. On Sunday morning we chartered the last mule on the place, and, with our rucksacks only, we left Arolla at mid-day. At Suri we caught the 4.35 train (which was more than two hours late) by five minutes, which put us down at Lausanne on Monday morning. We went to the Hotel Cecil, where we were well-known, and they gladly lent us money until the war should be over. George called on the American consul, and incidentally stated he wanted to obtain passports from the English consul. The American volunteered to give him a letter of introduction, and, armed with this, we soon obtained our passports. As no trains were running to Pontarlier, we crossed by steamer to Evian. It was a gloriously hot day, and the lake was looking its best.

At Evian we were placed in a cattle truck, with 70 French Reservists. There was nothing to eat—no seats save boards laid across the truck. We left Evian at mid-day, and stopping at every station, were in trucks until 1 a.m. the next day. The French Reservists fêted us when they learnt we were English officers—one had

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been French cook at the Hotel Cecil; he produced a roast chicken and fed us; he also produced a Union Jack and waved this out of the truck at every station, shouting that he had English officers with him.

At St. Amand we left our truck and spent 1½ hours on the platform in the dark, as all the light had failed. We wandered into the town, and chucked gravel at the window of a house to attract attention—a lady looked out, and soon we were supplied with food, beer, cheese and bread. The station waiting-room was full, so we adjourned to the luggage office, where we slept in the iron scales.

The reservists were one and all wild with enthusiasm —hatred of Germany and joy at thought of war. We saw some Italians at one of the stations, rather full of liquor, slow at getting back to their carriages; a French officer produced a pistol and they quickly entrained.

We had a second class carriage from St. Amand to Dijon. At Dijon we found a music-hall open, and obtained some food at the buffet. George made friends with the stationmaster, who had been a professor of French Literature, and the following conversation took place:

G. Do you know London?

STATION MASTER: Yes.

G. My brother (pointing at Charlie) is in the English Cavalry.

S. M. Eh! that is good.

G. You have seen Buckingham Palace?

S. M. Oh, yes.

G. Ah! then you have seen my regiment—The Guard of the King.

S. M. Oh, yes.

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This seemingly chance conversation procured us a first class carriage to Paris.

At La Roche we were hungry again—another cook appeared—he had been at the "400" club; he gave us hot soup and treated us with so much deference and consideration that he was "jumped on" by the station master for excess of zeal. As we were leaving La Roche, a third cook (Berkeley Hotel) came running out on to the platform waving welcome and good wishes.

We reached Paris in the small hours of the Tuesday morning—it *was* quiet. We drove across to St. Lazare and found a congestion of soldiers and luggage; here again, when they learnt who we were, they made a fuss and gave us good seats in the train.

At Rouen we saw trains-full of Regulars *en route* for the front—scrawled in chalk all over the carriages was "Train de luxe à Berlin!" At Dieppe we were unexpectedly welcomed by Lady Blanche Hozier, who seemed to be in supreme command—she fed us in princely fashion, and sitting enthroned on the boat till the last moment, cheered us on our way. On the boat an officer came up to George and said, "Sir, I see you are an officer and gentleman, may I offer to lend you some clothes and shaving material?"—rather melodramatic but welcome, as George had been in climbing "dèshabille" without change for several days.

The crowd on the quays at Dieppe cheered us to the echo and sang patriotic songs—most of those on board did the same.

We did a record crossing to Newhaven, shepherded by a large cruiser, and keeping a wary eye open for any submarine dangers—on the quay at Newhaven we saw a solitary English sentinel. We cheered him vocifer-

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ously—he looked immensely embarassed, and turned away in shy English fashion, without a gesture or sign of acknowledgment. We reached Victoria at about 5 o'clock on Wednesday.

Charlie went at once to Hammerwood and George on to Windsor. His knowledge of French had been invaluable on the journey.

The time at Champéry had stood him in good stead, and owing to the kindness of the Hotel Cecil people, the boys were able to help several stranded travellers *en route*.

The people who were travelling abroad had a terrible time. Their motors were seized, and they themselves suffered great indignity. A friend, Mrs. Hall, returned from Ems, and she wrote on September 4th, 1914:

DEAR MRS. WHIDBORNE,

I have returned from Germany after a terrible ten days. Quite suddenly on the 3rd of August we were told that in half an hour all foreigners were to leave the Hotel at Ems. Fortunately I had friends with me, Miss Phillimore and Mr. and Miss Hervey. We flung our clothes into our boxes, and took tickets to Nassau, as Miss Hervey was too ill to go further. When we arrived we found all the populace at the station to see the soldiers off, and when they saw us they jeered and hooted. Then the Burgermaster arrived and said we could not stop at Nassau, and when we asked him where we were to go as there was no train on, he said that was no business of his, but if we walked about the streets we should probably be shot. We sat on our boxes, in company with low Polish Jews, till midnight (we had arrived at 6 p.m.), and then the

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Burgermaster returned and said we might stay at a Sanatorium for the night. We and two nice Russian ladies went there, but before we left everything was minutely examined, and while this was going on two men with loaded guns were stationed outside, ready to shoot any suspect. All our money was taken from us, and when we arrived we found two men with loaded guns guarding the corridor where our rooms were. We heard shots being fired all night, which, we were told, meant the death of spies.

Eventually we stayed there till Thursday, when tickets were handed to us for Frankfurt, and the remainder of our money was returned to us. We found it had been "pooled," and besides our own expenses, we found we had paid for those who had no money! The Burgomaster said we had better be careful of our money, as when it was done we should be made to work in the fields.

Mrs. Hall and her party returned to Holland by the Rhine on a crowded steamer, and before they were able to cross the frontier shots were fired across the bows to stop them, and all the Englishmen of military age were seized. Young brides were separated from their husbands and mothers from their sons—it was a heart-rending sight. Other friends had similar or even worse experiences.

The correspondence of the next few weeks is given because it so well expresses the way in which the troops went out in the beginning, the breathless waiting for news, and the fear, which the younger officers felt, that the war would be over before they got their chance!—and the tension of feeling caused by the sudden "renversement" of all ideas and customs.

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Pullman Car Service,
August 6th, 1914.

I hope Charlie will see you all right this evening, and tell you all our wonderful experiences. I can't write them in a letter; they have been too extraordinary!

I am going up to London now, and I don't know what will happen when I get there!

I believe an expeditionary force has even now started for Belgium and France!

I shall probably go to Windsor.

Whatever happens, I believe I shall be all right, as I know what you will be doing!

I hope you will be all right. I should have either Seymour or Uncle Theodore to be with you; and keep Dibben, though you might let the footman go if he wants to. But that is your affair—Pardon! But keep someone, as Charlie and I can't be with you. If I have to go, I will see you first. God bless you and keep you safe.

Letter written by Mrs. Whidborne at this time:

About August 10th.

I had a great shock on Thursday evening when Rupert came down at 8.30 to tell me the Coldstream Guards had been ordered to Belgium. About 10 George turned up, very tired, with a bad cold, and said he was not to go with the Regulars, to his great disappointment. The Special Reserve was to drill men, and to fill up vacancies (by death). Not a single man had been absent when the battalions were called up! Everyone in his place to go to the front!

I am glad that George should have time to recover from his journey, but he is rather vexed, as most of his

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friends are in the Regulars. I enclose this letter (written when he thought he was going). I think you will like to see the spirit in which he will go, and unless something unforeseen occurs, he will leave before long. . . .

George is as usual very "funny." He and Charlie would far rather lose an arm or leg than not go, and it is rather dreadful to hear them joking about which part of themselves they could bear to do without!

We are going to have special prayers in Church on Sunday. . . .

George was so knocked up after his hurried journey home that he was quite ill. He wrote:

White Hart Hotel,
Windsor,
August 12th.

Isn't it a bore; I had to go to bed yesterday with a temperature and sore throat. Luckily I did all my work, and hope to be up again to-morrow. The 2nd Battalion left here at 3 o'clock for an "unknown destination." We do not know if we are going out in drafts or as a 4th Battalion, which we should much prefer.

There was loud singing and cheering last night in front of the officers' quarters. All the fellows in the 2nd might be going to be married judging by the presents from their friends.

We are getting our outfits. I was lucky to be able to get a service revolver. I have ordered some field-glasses and a compass and a thin raincoat, as *we* have to carry everything on our backs, just like the men. We are fitted with a man's "wet equipment," besides which we carry sword, revolver, glasses, map-case, compass, possibly an intrenching tool, a water bottle and a

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second pair of boots—in the pack is a thick coat, thin coat, waterproof sheet, etc.—so we have plenty to carry.

There is going to be "some battle" in a day or two.

He came up to London and had a farewell dinner with his family at the Windsor Hotel, Victoria Street—but still the order to move did not come.

Bachelors' Club,
Piccadilly,
About August 14th.

Things are moving very slowly; it almost seems as if they were stopping still after the excitement of last week.

I am afraid my cold was too bad for me to make a pathetic or dramatic farewell, and perhaps it is just as well, as the odds seem now 100 to 1 against my ever getting within 100 yards of business. The mobilized battalions have not moved yet. Our Reserve is almost ready, and I shall have a very busy week.

Victoria Barracks,
Windsor,
August, 1914.

Yesterday morning we had an alarm. At five o'clock I was woken by my servant. He said we were all going off. You can imagine I was not long dressing. After all, it was only a draft we were to send, i.e. 300 men and 3 officers. We paraded at 6.30, and with only one and a half hours off in the middle we worked till 4.30 p.m. getting them ready. The three officers were Watkins, Wallis, and Campbell, whom you met at Lausanne. The draft will probably go off this evening, and then we shall start getting the next one ready. I shall give a piece of the chocolate to each of the men

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in my platoon, who are going with this draft, just before they go to put in their pockets. The men are not allowed to smoke cigarettes, so I bought each of the men in my platoon a pipe!

After I had finished yesterday I went and played tennis with some people in Windsor called MacCooke, who were very kind, and gave us permission to go to their place, which is on the river, any time we could get off, and if they were not there we were to use it, as if it were our own.

Both Campbell and Wallis were in my Company, so now I am the only junior officer in the Company of about 300 men, and you can imagine my work won't be any lighter; besides extra guards and picquets.

The following letter shows his care for his men:

Victoria Barracks,
Windsor,
August 18th.

I have a job for the household. I have a list of names of the men in my platoon, i.e. my command. Their clothing must be marked, and some of them have no means of doing it. Will some of you write these names ten times each on some tape? Please don't cut each name off separately, but do them in strings of ten. . . . They are required as quickly as possible. As soon as you can.

They were sent very quickly.

Victoria Barracks,
Windsor.

Marvellous! How did you do it in time? Everyone here thinks I must be married, for whose family

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would ever be so devoted? You must have worked hard. Rather nice.

My company officer has just come in for orders, and says that a great fat fellow came and applied for leave off for the week-end!! On being asked what reasons he had for making the request, he said—"My girl is *pining* for me." Most of us might have said, "Well, so is mine."

I certainly think that Rees (the chauffeur), young Patience (the under chauffeur), Elphick (the second game-keeper), and William (the footman) should join the new Army, being the only ones on the place I can think of. You would be willing to keep their places open for them, wouldn't you? They will run no risk of danger, so you need not mind rather forcing it on them. . . .

I said good-bye to C— this afternoon . . . his poor father and mother and wife were down at Windsor; they were wonderful, but war *is* pretty awful!"

Windsor,
About August 22nd.

A telegram has just come, warning the whole battalion to be ready to go at twenty-four hours' notice, but one can't trust even these official notices. When *is* this casualty list coming out?

A telegram arrived to say that he was going out at once, and he would like his mother and sisters to go to Windsor to say good-bye. When they arrived they found him in a state of great irritation, because there was still some delay about his going.

It was very hot weather, and the terrible news of Mons was just filtering through.

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The sight of the draft of Coldstream Guards marching away to the Front and the Life Guards going off at 5 a.m. one morning will never be forgotten by those who saw them.

Note from:

Victoria Barracks,
Windsor,
August, 1914.

A telegram came last night warning the next draft. Unfortunately they only wanted one second lieutenant, so Boscawen gets it.[1] The other two Subalterns are Fielding and Fane.[2]

I had to take on Picquet officer last night and turn out the guard and go the rounds, so I didn't get to bed till just on 12 o'clock, and had to be up at six this morning preparing my draft. It is now five minutes to nine, and I am just going to do some picquet duties, including smelling the meat, after which I rush back to my company and go on outfitting the draft.

I shall be on picquet all to-day and to-morrow till 11 a.m., so I can't get out of the barracks, bother it, just as you have arrived.

. . . . . .

Windsor.
About August 24th.

What a to-do!

But it will be much better on guard, as you can come up to the Castle and see me. Look out of your balcony

[1] Second Lieut. Hon. V. D. Boscawen died of wounds, 1st Nov., 1914.

[2] Capt. H. N. Fane, 5th (R.) Battalion Coldstream Guards, badly wounded near Soupir Farm, 14th Sept., 1914.

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about 11.15 and you will see me marching by at the head of my men, and then you and R. and E. might just come up at the gate where I shall go in, and see the guard being changed.

Later. It has been changed again. I am on picquet and have to stay in barracks.

If I can manage it, I will send for you to come at about 5 or 6 o'clock.

The draft leaves at about 4 or 5 o'clock.

Letter from Mrs. Whidborne to her mother:

White Hart Hotel,
Windsor,
About August 24th.

We arrived here about 7 o'clock by motor. We saw only one aeroplane and a few men in khaki. . . . George came up to dinner, and we talked till past 10 o'clock.

It is a very solemn time, but George says we must be proud of what the Army has done and not think of the losses. There will be several thousand casualties. The way the Germans are behaving to the wounded adds to the horror of the war. . . .

Seven Austrian waiters have been taken from the hotel to-day to be interned, so everything is rather disorganised.

If Charlie had got in to the 9th Lancers, as he wanted to, he would have been in this awful fighting; he thinks he will go out this week.

Apparently they all like to have their relations at the end, but it is a great ordeal for them, and there are sad stories of young brides saying good-bye.

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They seem to think there is little chance of any of the present soldiers coming out unscathed.

George feels his collar-bone, where it was broken, a good deal when he carries his pack. He did twelve miles yesterday morning. He is to have the straps altered.

Last night they promenaded part of Kitchener's Army through the streets with a band, and in the night a large body of horses and men came in. . . .

George says the men who are gone are such splendid fellows; it seems such a pity the unfit should be left, but the "morale" of the troops is everything.

August 25th.

Last night I heard the Casualty List shouted in the street about mid-night. It was weird—to hear that hoarse voice shouting and to know what it would mean to many.

George's men went off on Sunday; he was very sad at letting them go without him. He was on guard at the Castle to-day for twenty-four hours. Between the times that he looks after the men, he sits in an interesting room, which looks out opposite the hotel. It has autographs of Guards' officers all over the walls, some carved into the wood and on the sides of the deep window, also many amateur drawings. The weather is very thundery and close.

George says it requires so much more courage now to think of being wounded than it did at first. He never knows when he will be able to come up—and is very tired, and he cannot motor with us, as we had hoped. He does want us to "see him off."

Charlie telephoned last night. He thought he would go to-day or to-morrow, and hoped he might cross with

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George. He is to be attached to the 20th Hussars, which suffered so much last week. I have said good-bye to him through the telephone; rather a modern way of giving a parting blessing![1]

His mother to Miss Alice Whidborne:

White Hart Hotel,
Windsor.

George is much pleased with the French money that you sent him but he is too busy to write. He is on duty from 6 a.m. to 12 p.m., rather a long day, and he is very tired. He had to get the draft off on Sunday.

He did not go with them, as only one officer of his rank went, but he will probably go next time. This waiting is very trying to one of his temperament. I tell him and Charlie that training the soldier is the most important work—and I see the papers say so.

Charlie thinks that he will go to-day or to-morrow, but I have had no telegram yet, which he hoped to be able to send, but such secrecy is observed that he was not sure if it would be possible.

George is devoted to his men and they to him; one can see it. They gave him three cheers when they were leaving the barracks on Sunday, which, he said, though gratifying, had to be stopped, as the General was there.

He says the Reservists need great tact, more than he has got! as they have been on their own and have lost discipline. He took guard yesterday, and marched up with the band, etc., as they do in London. He looked

[1] After all he did not go till a week or so later. He was once ordered to return to India, and the order was cancelled as he was on the way to the boat.

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so handsome, you would have been proud of him. It was the first time I had seen my soldier son as a soldier. He had to sit in the guard-room all day and look after the men at intervals. We had lunch and tea, and spent the afternoon with him.

The men have one room and the officers another in the walls of the Castle. There is a comfortable place in the recess of the window where you can lie and look out, and I reposed there, as I was very tired. It has been so hot, and Sunday was an emotional day—on top of the journey—with the troops going off, and I had rather a touching talk with George. He says, even if he had not been a soldier, he would have had to enlist now. He seemed to think I should mind very much and think him wrong to leave me, and was relieved at my taking it "Spartan-mother" like—dear boy.

He and Charlie regret having no "girl" to leave behind. So I have to be extra much to them.

What an exciting rumour about the Russians. Charlie thinks it is true, as an officer told him that he had to see them through York!—but the papers do not admit it.

Charlie has great difficulty in getting horses, and yet we see beautiful ones here not taken.

General Lyttelton says we must not believe all the stories we hear about the cruelties. . . .

Sunday was a terrible day. Nothing short of a miracle could have saved our troops last week.

The people who enlist now will not go to the Front for a long time, but we shall want a huge army to frighten the enemy when the war is finished.

How proudly George showed off his sword, expatiating on the glorious achievements of his regiment,

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reading out the list of battles[1] engraved on it, and picturing himself leading his men forward whilst he waved encouragement with it . . . .

How little he thought, before a year had passed, he would be leaving it at home as an almost obsolete weapon.

Letter from his brother Charles:

Colchester,
Cavalry Barracks,
September 8th.

Just a line to tell you I am going to-morrow, if all goes well—I hope you will be going too—I have to take a draft of about 50 men and 100 horses, but I may leave the horses en route somewhere. . . . Good luck to you. Hurry up and come and join me if you are not coming to-morrow.

Last note from George in England:

Bachelors' Club,
Piccadilly,
September.

I have come up again to-day to be inoculated. I think it is worth while being done. No more news!

It *was* nice having you down at Windsor.

[1] Engraved on sword:

1680, Tangiers.	Talavera.	Sevastopol.
1695, Namur.	Egypt.	1882, Egypt.
1704-5, Gibraltar (siege).	Varossa.	Tel-el-Kebir.
	Fuentes d'Ontori.	1885, Suakim.
Oudenarde.	Nieve.	1889-1902, S. Africa.
Malplaquet.	Waterloo.	Modder River.
Dettingen.	Alma.	Northern France.
Linselles.	Inkerman.	Mons.

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Victoria Barracks,
Windsor.

We are leaving in ten minutes. . . . I have had a jolly good life so far. . . . I think that this will be the most amusing part of it! I am so glad I am leaving Windsor and so glad you were able to come down here.

September 11th,
Southampton Docks.

8.15 p.m.

I don't know yet if we are going to cross to-night.

To his Aunts:

Victoria Barracks,
Windsor,
September 11th.

Well, the time has come!

We are leaving in an hour, 6 officers and 500 men.

You can't imagine what waiting here has been like!

I will come and pay you a visit very soon after I get back.

My hair looks very funny, as it has been cut quite short and sticks bolt upright—a sort of cross between a German and a hedgehog.

I find it very hard to think of a really good remark to make that can be repeated by you all with pride—something like "My King and Country need me, so I needs must go." That would be all right, and it scans pretty well in case you care to incorporate it in a little verse!

Postcard (to Eustace Strong):

Southampton Docks.

Do you remember the last time we were here? We are just going across. (The last time had been on the way to South Africa.)

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His uncle, Captain Bertram Chambers, had just returned from Australia, where as member of the Commonwealth Naval Board, captain of the Training Ship "Encounter" and of the Naval College, he had been helping to lay the foundations of a New Navy, with a success evidenced by the Sydney-Emden fight and other naval happenings of the war.

The declaration of war found Captain Chambers in command of the old ironclad "Illustrious," guarding the Channel for the passage of our first expeditionary force. He was soon after appointed to the "Roxburgh," an armoured cruiser in the Grand Fleet, and in her experienced the rigours of the first winter of the war. In the spring he was invalided, thereby escaping the torpedoing of his ship, which took place a few weeks after his departure. He was, however, soon back on duty, serving as King's Harbour Master at the Grand Fleet's chief base.

The story of an incident that happened to him when on leave at a little place called Bantham, in Devonshire, just before the declaration of war, is worth recording, and is given in his own words:

"The manœuvres were over, and though we knew, of course, that political relations were strained, we had heard the tale so often that we felt sure that diplomacy would triumph in the end, and that some way out of the difficulty would be found. I had promised myself a *real* holiday for years, and each time I had planned one something had always intervened to spoil it. This time I meant to have six weeks without ties or duties to prevent full enjoyment. I had got my new motor car from the garage at Plymouth, and it was running beautifully, and I hoped to do the thirty miles to Bantham in an hour or so. Five miles out of Plymouth I

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discovered an ominous rattle. "Confound it!" I said, "those wretched garage people always leave something loose." I got down to see what was wrong, and there, lying on the step of the car, was a child's sword about two feet long—a German one too—with the hilt pointing towards me. It must have been there some time, and its rattling had attracted my attention. It must have been thrown up there by the wheels. I told the story when I got home—I had been saying that I had quite made up my mind that I had been to sea for the last time. Nora said then half in joke, 'Don't you believe it—it's an omen—you will have to take the sword in hand very soon, and as the point was away from you, you will come safely through the war."

It is extraordinary, in the light of later events, to look back and read the letters written by people in England at the beginning of the war. When our boys went out, making such a brave show but with the dread in their hearts that they hardly liked to mention to their nearest and dearest—the dread that they might "funk" at the Front—their relations wrote hopefully to each other of how the war would "soon be over," and they would be welcoming their soldiers back again as conquering heroes before long.

There were, however, a few who realised that the struggle would be fierce and long, and as Lord Kitchener's prognostications began to be fulfilled and the long winter of 1914-15 wore away, the tone of the letters alters from absurd optimism to a grim determination to endure with fortitude whatever the future might bring and to help in every way possible.

George sailed from Southampton on September 12th, Charlie having left two days earlier, for after having

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been ordered to India to rejoin his own Regiment (the 14th (King's) Hussars), he had been finally attached to the 20th Hussars, then in France.

As many of George's letters were undated, it has only been possible in some cases to give the months in which they were written.

The following are extracts from his correspondence with home—to his mother—when not otherwise stated.

George's first letters from France were looked for with the greatest interest, and were very graphic.

September, 1914.

We arrived at Southampton at 8.15. The train went straight to the docks, and the troops were shipped there. I was allowed to go and see Grandmama, so taxied up to Moorhill. Aunt Nora was there too. Dodd made a pad for my shoulder to fasten my collar together with, so that I should feel my collar-bone less. To carry out the scheme of military buttons on my coat, she cut two buttons off a boy's sailor suit. I feel like a marine now! I got back on board at 12.30 p.m. The boat is merely a shell, with planks here and there as partitions. I believe there are between two and three thousand aboard. Acheson,[1] Northland,[2] Lawrence, Douglas-Pennant[3] and Rooke[4] and I sleep on the upper deck. The boards are pretty hard, but I slept like a top. I had to get up earlier this morning than I much cared about, because so many people trod on me! The ship

[1] Capt. Lord Acheson, M.C., 16th Dec., 1915. G.S.O., 2nd grade, War Office; wounded twice.

[2] Lieut. Viscount Northland, killed in action at Cuinchy, 1st Feb., 1915.

[3] Lieut. Hon. C. Douglas-Pennant, killed in action, 29th Oct., 1914.

[4] Temp. Capt. D. G. Rooke, G.H.Q., special appointment.

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goes very slowly, about a knot an hour; they say we shall not disembark for 42 hours, and no one knows where. We had a very good breakfast this morning, sardines, bread, butter, jam and an egg. Unfortunately we could not get any hot water to make tea with.

Anyone who cares for picnics would have the time of their lives here. I don't know if I shall ever get this sent to you. I won't put in names of any places. We are creeping very slowly round the the I.O.W. It was very funny to see Cowes. I could distinctly see Egypt House, where I stayed with the Bradshaws. The last time I came this way was on my way to Africa.

The men are all very cheerful. My Company are pretty sick. I am not going with them. I am going to the 3rd Battalion, which got so cut up at Mons. We have now been three days aboard the Turcoman. On Sunday we had a service, attended by all the Coldstream officers and by an Argyll and Sutherland officer named Macpherson, who knew Malcolm Sandeman.[1] We are now waiting outside (censored), on the west coast of France. I have been Mess-President, a post as nearly corresponding on the boat to mess waiter as possible.

September 19th, 1914.

We are all very happy and going on well. Plenty to eat and fairly warm at nights! It is very difficult to know how much I can say. We are very near the Front now.

I did not see Charlie at the Camp when we landed, as I hoped I should. I had two very nice bathes in the sea. I am feeling *very* well and fit. This train is so amusing; it stops every ten minutes, and all the men

[1] Made prisoner of war in Argyle and Sutherland charge, 1914; brother to Mrs. Marcus and Mrs. Theodore Chambers.

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get out each time, and it is very hard to get them back in time. The country is beautiful, and it would make quite a good hunting country. When we see any roots we wonder how many partridges they hold. The towns are very old and the cottages grey and thatched, like Devonshire.

I had to unload a train of 300 wounded the other day. . . . Could you see that the money I got when the "Major" was taken goes to the Coldstream Relief Fund? I wonder where the poor "Major" is now. G.O.K. when this letter will reach you—perhaps never. I tell you if it was not for the Censor it would be quite interesting, in spite of my not having yet been in the firing-line. I am at this moment eating some of that delicious chocolate you bought at Stewart's in Bond Street.

I saw a fellow called Chinnery[1] in the Coldstream, who is also in the Flying Corps. The last time I saw him was at a Ball in London. I also saw a fellow who was in the Grove (Harrow).

There are only women and old men the whole way along the line. I don't know when I shall be able to write again; I am having the time of my life at present. . . .

September 20th.

We went up to a place this morning, from where we could hear the guns firing. Then luckily we put the engines on the other end and went the other way. We shall be with our battalion this afternoon. The men have rather quieted down since seeing the trains of wounded going by. I have three very funny people in

[1] Capt. E. F. Chinnery, killed in action (flying accident), Jan. 18, 1915.

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the carriage, and circumstances seem to quicken their humour; the consequence is that there are roars of laughter the whole time. We have seen a bridge blown up by the Germans and the telegraph wires cut. It has been pouring with rain all the morning, which will be very unpleasant when we leave the train, as we shall have to sleep out in future. There was a frost last night!!

To his Uncle, Eustace Strong:

September 22nd.

I must write because some very amusing things have happened to me. I was called away a second ago because a German aeroplane has just flown over us, throwing out silver discs and smoke bombs. Their guns take the range and then plump a shell on us, so I had to move under shelter. As Lawrence has just remarked, "Think of the time when one paid to see the beastly things!!"

We had our baptism of fire this morning. We halted by a canal, and then advanced by platoons in fours across a large open. I was in our last platoon, and when the others were half way across I started. Suddenly a gun went off—nothing unusual—but then we heard a sizzle—sizzle—sizzle—through the sky, and saw a large explosion in the next field, which was the first shell I ever saw burst. One was very interested, thinking it a rather exciting show; but then—bang—bang—and sizzle through the sky, like tearing calico rather unevenly; but more in our direction—and splosh!—and one suddenly awoke to the situation that it was at *us* they were shooting. We still had about a quarter of a mile to go across this blooming plain; they getting the range better, and finally bursting three or four simul-

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taneously 25 yards the other side of us; they came singing across just over our heads like a covey of partridges. We doubled the last 100 yards to a stone wall like Marathon runners. There were a number of dead horses all along this road, as they have been shelling it the last eight days. A shell had burst in the middle of one of them, and he was all anyhow! I felt quite like one does in a ticklish place on a mountain, and frightfully excited, but I imagine one calms down after a bit.

I passed poor . . . (censored) coming down wounded, on the way from the station. We have a rest day to-morrow, and go into the trenches the next day. I imagine they will be pretty exciting. I have never seen or heard anything like last night when we were marching up to the battle-field after dark. They opened a terrific bombardment, big guns, machine guns and rifle fire rattling away for ten miles. You could see the flashes and burning places where things had caught fire, very dark clouds and an intermittent drizzle.

To his Grandfather and Grandmother:

September 23rd.

It does seem a long time since I dropped in on you, at the dead of night.

Grandpapa would love to be here; there are lots of things that would appeal to his poetical imagination, one of them being what the men have told me about the Coldstream officers—we have, I am afraid, lost a great many. In the Company I went to, out of six that started there was only one left when I arrived, though one who was wounded in Belgium has come back again. They tell me that they never thought of themselves once, and spent their whole time, when under fire,

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steadying their men and giving directions. The men seem to be as good, one of them got the V.C. yesterday and two others Distinguished Conduct Medals, the next highest thing. They crawled out under heavy fire between the two lines and brought in a wounded man, who would otherwise have had to lie there till the battle was over, which looks like another month still. It has been going on for a fortnight, during which we have not shifted 100 yards. It is very funny writing in the trenches while they are shelling them; it sounds horribly dangerous, but it is not really very—the earth shakes and flies, but we burrow well underground. I have been under shell fire in the open and under shrapnel in the trenches.

I will stop and look you up on the way back if we land at Southampton. I hope it will be before Xmas, but I don't see much chance of that.

It is horribly cold sleeping out at nights; tell Dodd that the collar has kept me very warm.

September 27th.

I don't think I had been up in the trenches when I last wrote to you. We went up and relieved the Irish Guards and dug through the night, improving the trenches and also keeping watch. I got in some sleep between 1 o'clock and the time we stand to arms, which is before daybreak. There are very good trenches here —they are a series of a sort of enlarged rabbit-holes, with a long deep trench joining them all and the end ones on to the trenches of the battalions on each side of you. I spent the first few hours after day-light digging in under the back of my trench, chiefly for something to do, but I was jolly glad of it when they began shelling the trenches. They began at about 9 o'clock, and

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kept it up continuously till 12.30. During that time you cower at the back of your hole, shivering with fright. I was so frightened that I went to sleep after about half an hour as a sort of way out of it. They shell up and down the line, and when it comes to your turn to receive their attentions, the ground shivers and the earth at the top of the trench runs off on to you in a stream. There is a smell of gun-powder or gas or something—one is greatly relieved when they switch it off. I have often seen a rabbit, outside its hole, bolt in when surprised, but I was sitting at the mouth of my hole the other day when a gun went off—the next thing I remember—I moved so quickly—was that I was shaking with laughter at my celerity, and then after that the shell burst. So you can imagine the whole thing did not take quite so long to happen as it does to write.

Yesterday we were on reserve about 500 yards behind the firing-line, where luckily there are a number of caves. We "hide the men by fifties" in their caves, or rather by platoons, and apart from a little digging in the communicating trenches and a little visiting of sentries, we spent a very comfortable night. The day goes very slowly both in the trenches and in reserve.

We have the full benefit of the day; literally the full 24 hours. We came down last night, had a good dinner and then a cigar and a little glass of rum, and then a really good sleep in a bed-stead in a billet. I have always enjoyed my bed and my little bit of sleep; but really one does appreciate it on these occasions.

Thank goodness, the fine weather is lasting, though I am afraid it looks very shaky to-day. Anything more disagreeable than the trenches in wet weather one cannot imagine; apart from the damp, they fall in on you when, in your anxiety to shelter from the shrapnel, you

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burrow into them. I used to lie in the back of my trench, literally lining the back of the trench; if the earth had been softer and more of a mould, you would have seen a sort of plaster cast of me.

First I lay facing the opening; then I thought I don't want my face or stomach hit, so then I turned over with my back to the opening; and when the next shell burst my anxiety for my spine was so great that it brought me over again. The best epigram of war I have heard yet is: "A period of extreme discomfort, punctuated by moments of abject terror." The fellow was not far wrong. But I am enjoying myself immensely, apart from the "moments of abject terror," and everyone is very decent and there is a lot of amusement.

I have been very fit since I landed in France. I had my hair clipped close to my head when I landed, but it has grown since, and is a good length now—if only I could tell it to stop growing until a fortnight before I come home.

We are having a rest day, after having been in the trenches three days—we came down after dark last night. A rest day is really harder work than the days in the trenches.

8 a.m. Breakfast.

9.10. Company ordering.

At 11 rifle and "iron ration" inspection—feet, boots and socks inspection, and cleaning out of billets till 12.15. I then snatch some lunch, followed by a "fatigue" till 4.30. More food, and I set out for trenches again at 5.30. The "fatigue" is making a new road. I am a sort of foreman to a gang of navvies, who load up barrows at a gravel pit and empty them on the new track.

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September.

You will be glad to hear that I am still alive and thriving. There has not been anything very exciting happening. Continuous shelling both in the villages and in the trenches, but no attacks on the part of either side. The trenches are pretty comfortable in this fine weather, the only objection being the bodies of several dead Germans, about 200 yards away, whom we cannot get at to bury.

But, of course, the wind is not always in the same direction! Another fellow and I got four brace of partridges the other day, having borrowed the gun of the local keeper. Cartridges are very precious. There was continuous shell fire across the valley we were shooting in, but, of course, we were not worth the while of a shell, even if they saw us. I am afraid my letters will remind you of my school letters, very little news and nearly all requests for food and clothes.

I want a leather racing motorist's cap, lined with jaeger and with ear flaps, that will undo with the cap still on. It is bitterly cold out at night, though it has not started raining yet. Please try and get matches through, also writing paper and envelopes—most important—also "woodbines" and cigarette paper for the men. Miss Weber's woollen caps were very much appreciated, and we should be glad of some more.

The weather is lovely at present; this is a beautiful valley, and the woods are changing colour. There are lovely red sunrises and sunsets, of which we get the full benefit.

My watch is from 12 p.m. to 2 a.m., and from 4 a.m. till 6 a.m. The time goes very slowly then. I have had three letters from you already, which have been much appreciated. You might send me some

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cheap novels by decent authors, as we are pretty sick of reading the papers, which contain "warmed up" accounts of how one has spent one's afternoon a week ago. I should like to hear in my letters things about Hammerwood and gossip—nothing to do with the war. Please send me some indelible pencils—also a small paintbox and sketching paper, very fine. I wish I had it here now. I should not mind one of those Fortnum and Mason plum puddings.

During the month of October the fighting was too severe for much correspondence, and it was a bad time for the relations at home. The battle of St. Julien was about October 22nd, and the first battle of Ypres and Rentoul Woods began about October 26th. As the battles lasted for weeks and developed from one place into another, it is difficult to give accurate dates—probably even historians of the war are at present a little hazy about the chronological order of these times.

October.

We are having a rest day to-day, and go up into the trenches this evening. The way lies through a wood, into which the Germans drop shells, making an awful noise, and then at the end of the wood we extend and double into the trenches. The Germans dine early, and then, after several glasses of Kümmel or something, they start a terrific big gun fire and then advance with machine guns and rifle fire. This lasts at intervals from about 5 a.m. to 9.30, during which time it is not safe to walk about the streets of the village we are resting in, which is about half a mile behind the firing line. I did not know this, and the night before last I was having an excellent dinner in a cottage at the

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bottom of the village when some shells burst up at the top end, where my men were. I thought I had better go and see how they were getting on. I had hardly gone 100 yards when a bullet hit the wall above my head, and immediately another hit some iron railing quite close, so I turned and doubled back as hard as I could go, and got behind a wall and chose another route up the village, chiefly behind walls and buildings. They rattled on the walls above my head, but I did not give them much chance of rattling against me. I went back and enjoyed a wonderfully good dinner, "dug out" by the French interpreter and cooked by a villager; some very good vermicelli soup, some chicken (I should say fowl, the youngest fowl left in the village is two and a half years old), very good salad, bread and cheese, some very good champagne sort of wine finished off with a taste of Kümmel, which someone had very thoughtfully sent out to Paddy Wallis.[1]

The battalion came down off the hill the next morning, and we had breakfast—very good—ration bacon and marmalade and tea. When we are down here the battalion mess together in a billiard saloon! Of the original mess that left England there are only eight officers now—in my Company only one—a subaltern—and he is commanding another Company—in ordinary life I should be an ensign.

We get very complimentary remarks from headquarters, and I must say they have deserved it. We had a distribution of the dead officers' kit yesterday, which was very pathetic. All their chief things, like swords and compasses, are sent home—and things like socks, boots, etc., are divided among the other officers or their men as required. There is a lovely house here,

[1] Lieut. H. D. Wallis, killed in action, Oct. 27, 1914.

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with a big garden, which is used as a hospital and Brigade headquarters at the Lodge. Artillery horses and waggons are all over the lawns, and you see an old waggon-horse bedding down quite comfortably on a geranium bed!

This morning is a lovely September day, light blue sky, clear and crisp—the Colonel was complaining at breakfast that he had not brought his gun—there are so many partridges here, and, as he said, he had brought every other sort of weapon. I was talking to a gunner officer this morning, and he told me that a number of engineers had been sitting for four days in their spare time along the canal here trying to catch fish with bent pins. They were just getting disgusted and were saying that there were no fish there, when a shell dropped in the middle of the canal amongst them. In a moment the surface was white with the bellies of dead fish!

Letter to an Aunt—Miss Whidborne:

October 14th.

I have had three very acceptable letters; they are so nice and usual. I don't want to hear about the war; one hears about that every five minutes here in the shape of a shell, aeroplane or stray bullet; consequently I like to hear in my letter that the leaves are falling or that the second housemaid is going to marry the under-gardener. I am quite happy about myself, but I am a little nervous about Charlie. I know he will go and try and kill a German or something instead of remaining discreetly under cover. The worst of these "Black Marias" is that no ordinary cover that one comes across is any use if they happen to select the spot where one is. I went partridge shooting the other day, as we had a "rest day." We got four brace, and took them to the field

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hospital. They send the worst cases away as soon as they can down to the Base, but there are a number of men always in the hospital—those either too bad to be moved or people who have gone in to get their "insides" in order. "Insides" are fairly common in the trenches these cold nights.

This is a lovely valley; during the day we lie outside the trenches and bask in the sun. Long may it continue!

We are expecting some big fighting in the next fortnight. I won't say where; that is the correct, mysterious attitude in letters home. Rather absurd, because the people at home generally know what we are going to do before we do it.

To his brother Seymour:

October 24th, 1914.

I haven't the vaguest idea where Hemel Hempstead is—but I am very glad that you are there, and I am sure you will like the place. I am glad you are being so energetic!

Do you think you will soon be out here? I advise you not to—at least till next summer, when the nights will be a bit warmer.

I think Charlie must be somewhere within 50 miles or so of me from what I can make out. I do wish I could see him. I hope he will be all right. I am afraid he will go and be brave or do something rash, from what I know of old Charlie!

You needn't worry about me in that respect. You may rely on me that all possible precautions with regard to my safety have and will most certainly be taken, so DON'T WORRY! Now, bring out some more guns as soon as you can.

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About October 27th.

We have made a big move. We are shortly going to get some real fighting. We are just concentrating here.

We are going to have a football match this afternoon, in which I am going to play, also a concert, in which I shall not perform.

As we came up here in the train we passed a trainload of wounded, who told us that they had only come up the morning before—pretty short work that! When we got here the town was seething with excitement. The rest of the 4th Brigade came the next day. We have the most delightful billet here. The three officers of my company, Tritton,[1] Horlick[2] and I are staying in a charming large French house. The gentleman who owns it is a very old, white whiskered Royalist. We each have a large bedroom—with a bed, with sheets and pillows in it! This morning I did not get up till seven, and my servant brought me some tea. Active Service! The cook does our meals, and we live like fighting cocks. We say "let us eat and drink," etc.—and one might as well have the best one can. Yesterday there was a large funeral, an officer and over 20 men. There was a long procession of the inhabitants, headed by the major, who made a very good funeral oration. All the flags in the town were hung out. The officer secured a coffin, but the men were just carried by on stretchers, wrapped in blankets, with wounded soldiers marching beside them as mourners.

The officers of the Brigade who fell when we were

[1] Capt. A. G. Tritton, killed in action near Rue de l'Epinette, 26th Dec., 1914. Mentioned in despatches twice.

[2] Capt. J. N. Horlick, Brigade Major, 181st Inf. Brigade.

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fighting down on the Aisne were buried in the local cemetery, and their graves were very nice.

It will make you laugh when I tell you the name of the place [1] we went to first in the train; also when I tell you the name of the second town.

Our company is commanded by the three great schools. Tritton is an old Wykamist, and Horlick was at Eton.

I saw the most wonderful sight last night that I think I have ever seen; a division of French cavalry passed through, dragoons, chasseurs, cuirassiers. It was not this war at all, but 1870 or even 1815. They wore their red breeches, blue and black tunics, with red and blue facings, and their helmets with their long hair tails.

They had lances and swords.

The cuirassiers wore their steel cuirasses, uncovered by khaki of any sort. Some regiments wore their pale blue tunics that one knows so well through the Horse show. Regiment after regiment passed through all night.

We unfortunately left our comfortable billet at an early hour the other morning, and marching towards the sound of the guns, we arrived here. This is a very good country billet—a large, very clean farmhouse and a delightful housewife, who gives us very good butter, fresh eggs and very good salad.

I have received a number of parcels here; people are very kind.

Postcard, received November 2nd:

"I have not had time to write a letter for ten days, only an occasional field-service postcard, which they are

[1] Le Touquet, where he spent a summer whilst at school.

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very good at supplying. This is a German postcard, which has come out of a German pack; it has, you notice, the address already written on it, which I am leaving. When I get a chance I will write and tell you of my experiences. We have been fighting all the time, and there seems every prospect of going on for another ten days. I have not had my clothes off for a fortnight, and have slept out every night, except one, for ten days. I have seen 'all the sights.' The most exciting was an aeroplane, which was fired on, and caught fire and came down all of a heap. I am enjoying it very much.

"The plum puddings have arrived and are very acceptable, also some very good cigars—Oliver Twist!

"The men are very good and quite cheerful, and very clean and well shaved. We are always being asked if we are 'Kitchener's Army just come out.'"

There was a wonderfully graphic account in the *Daily Mail* of the battle of Ypres, in which both George and Charlie took part, describing how even the cooks and orderlies were pressed into the thin line of our Army, which George said was a true description of what happened. They heard the voices of the Germans behind them, and it was a miracle that they were not surrounded. The Coldstream Guards were holding back the Prussian Guard, and though our losses were tremendous, we can always be proud of the fact that our best men were too much for the best men of the German army.

It was very seldom that George could be persuaded to recount his experiences, but several times when he was in the mood, his uncles, by skilful questions would start him off, and then he would give such a brilliant and vivid account of some incident that he had seen

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that one longed to take it all down for the sake of others.

In October the following notice, or one containing a similar request, was sent all over the country:

BELGIAN REFUGEES

"Many Belgian Refugees are now arriving in this country, and the Local Government Board state that further offers of Hospitality would be welcome. Would anyone willing to help, whether by taking them into their houses for a time or in any other way, at once communicate with The War Refugees Committee, Aldwych, London."

It will never be forgotten by those poor victims of the Germans how home after home was opened to them, though in some places it was found more practicable—as at East Grinstead—to collect funds and take a house and furnish it for two or three Belgian families, so that they could lead the life to which they were accustomed until they found work. There had to be a good deal of shifting about, as some of the townspeople found refuge in little country cottages in remote places, whilst peasants were installed in cities or in the mansions of the nobility.

The frightened people seemed to expect the Germans to follow them, objecting in one case to the insular position of England, and asking piteously "Where one could flee to if the enemies came here?"

But on the whole the arrangement and placing of some thousands of alarmed men, women and children was marvellously completed; though it was found necessary to move them from the coast areas owing to the number of spies that came over with them.

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Many Belgians fled to France, and George mentions them in the following letter:

Received November 12th.

At last I find time to sit down and really write a long letter.

We have been fighting continuously for a fortnight, and as before it has developed into this beastly trench business.

When we left the Aisne, we came back to Belgium again. (The Germans know this well enough by now, so it does not matter my telling you.)

We stopped on the way at the station for Le Touquet; there in the dark was the little tram drawn up outside, waiting to go to Paris Plage in the morning! We then went to Calais. Imagine the tantalization, only three hours from London, and 59 miles from Hammerwood!

We had a very good billet at Hazebroucke, as I think I told you; we then marched to a small village, Boischappe, and stopped in a delightful farm-house; we were there several days, and marched away at 4 a.m. on October 17th. Since then I have not had my clothes off, nor had as much sleep as I wanted. We marched all that day; the monotony of marching was relieved, first by hundreds of Belgian peasants, and even better classes, fleeing, usually with a handkerchief full of their belongings, from the sound of guns and the smoke of burning villages, and secondly, by fine rain which began to fall. We went into billets about 4 p.m.

I had just got my platoon into a cowshed and had appeased their wrath at actually being made to share the billet with its delightful occupiers—I had just cleared a corner in a room (the room being crowded

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with absolutely dazed refugees, too exhausted to move further that night)—I had just got the servants out to get some tea ready, when we got the word to fall in!

We marched on again through the dark and wet, with a halt of a couple of hours by the side of the road, where we were passed by excited cavalry, French and British, and listened to the guns.

We got into another billet about half past seven, at a town called St. Julien. We had just had dinner, and I had actually lain down in front of a stove on the kitchen floor, expecting a luxurious night, when we had an alarm. We had to march out a quarter of a mile to where a squadron of the (censored) were guarding one of the roads to the village. They had only just come from S. Africa, and were rather nervy, thinking they saw Germans everywhere.

We had got our waterproof sheets out, and were lying in the road trying to sleep when they opened a burst of fire about 50 yards off, killing one of their own men—which was about all there was to kill, and completely disturbing even the very little sleep we might have got on the wet road.

Next morning just as it got light we went back to St. Julien, and while we were having breakfast we heard that a general advance of the whole line was ordered for half past eleven. We were ready to start about ten, and marched off half a mile along a road, under cover of a hedge; then we came to the foot of the ridge we were going to occupy. No. 3 and 2 Co.'s went on extending to 3 paces to the left, just as though they were doing an "attack" in Windsor Park.

We did not see them after they went over the ridge—then we extended and went through the mangel field, a pheasant was put up on the left and went over my head;

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one of my sergeants told me afterwards that I raised my stick to it as though to shoot, though I did not know I did at the time; just at that moment. . . . (Here the letter stops.)

Some people have taken exception to the following letters as describing the horrors of war too graphically, but it must be remembered that for months the Guards were fighting practically in a cemetery, and if our soldiers can go through these sufferings, it is only right that those whom they have saved from seeing the same thing in England should know something of their experiences, and George realised that his nearest and dearest liked to hear every detail that he might tell. He apologised afterwards for having written in such a way, but it was natural to him to pour out his feelings and thoughts to those to whom he wrote. His sensitive temperament deeply felt the tremendous "cost" of the war, the unspeakable horrors of the first winter in the trenches (which were very unlike those of 1916) making an ineradicable impression on his mind, but the spirit of self-sacrifice, almost universal amongst the men of those first gallant armies, carried him through all those months of physical and mental strain. Knowing how highly strung his nervous temperament was, his friends admired the splendid way in which he refused to give in until he was wounded, although he suffered very much from the damp of the trenches.

Received about November 18th.

(Sheet alluded to in letter.)

Just about the moment that the first man in my platoon was hit, we went up the hill all right, with only

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a little stray rifle fire, and came to a farm. We searched this very carefully, as the "Alleymans" sometimes leave a machine gun behind in a farm. We had a check here. We had one platoon behind the farm, two "dug themselves in" about a field in front, to make a strong line for the company in front to retire through, and the other was facing half left, trying to link up with the 5th Brigade, who were on our left. This Brigade could not get on, and our No. 2 Company had got about a mile too far ahead. We could not leave a gap between the next Brigade, so we could not help No. 2. They had to retire, and lost very heavily; I believe 89 men were missing in the company that night, and poor Paddy Wallis, who was the subaltern. I was watching them, or rather No. 3 Co., retiring through my glasses. I saw one wounded fellow struggling in, throw up his arms and fall over. I thought: Now he is done, but he got up again. He wasn't up half a minute when down he went again a second time, and yet he struggled in behind the farm where Rentoul, the doctor, was tying them up. He is back in England now, and going on well. Poor Rentoul! He was much too brave for a doctor—they ought to keep further back. He was right up there, doing our fellows up when he was hit in the arm. He died two hours before our stretcher-bearers arrived two days later, from loss of blood.

The rest of the day the fighting was rather desultory.

My platoon lying down, dug trenches in a ploughed field. We shot a few Germans, and our guns fired shrapnel over our heads and killed a lot. We got nervous at one time because, as so often happens, our shells dropped a bit short.

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About November 12th, 1914.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

In the afternoon of the St. Julien advance we "dug ourselves in" in a ploughed field, and watched the "Alleymans" coming across a gap about 600 yards to our left front. As they came across we put volleys into them, and then they doubled into a small copse, where they were met by clouds of our shrapnel. It was very pleasant, more especially as we did not come across much in the way of a return fire. The only fly in the ointment was that our shells were bursting so near in front of us that now and then one or two would burst over our trenches, which, of course, were very shallow and had no protection from the rear. We had joined up with the 5th Brigade on our left, and 2 and 3 Co.'s had retired on our right and were in line with us, but had had very heavy losses. No. 2 Co. had 89 killed, wounded and missing, including their Sergeant-Major and Paddy Wallis, and No. 3 Co. had lost a good many men, and Charles Monck,[1] who commanded them, and Guy Darell,[2] wounded, so that Cottrell Dormer,[3] who joined about three months before the war, was for the second time left a junior ensign commanding a Company. Unfortunately he went sick two days later. The Colonel, Fielding,[4] was wounded in the wrist. Our doctor, who was *very* brave, was wounded in the arm, and could not get home. He lay out for two nights,

[1] Capt. Hon. C. H. S. Monck, killed in action at St. Julien, 21st Oct., 1914.

[2] Br.-Major G. M. Darell, M.C., D.A.G.M.G., 2nd Army.

[3] Lieut. C. M. Cottrell Dormer, D.S.O., died of wounds at Bethune, 8th Feb., 1915. Mentioned in despatches.

[4] Temp. Major-Gen. G. P. T. Fielding, C.B., D.S.O., G.O.C., Guards Division. Mentioned in despatches five times.

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and died from loss of blood two hours before our stretcher-bearers went out for the wounded, when the ground was again clear of Germans. Leese,[1] a recruit who joined on the declaration of war, was wounded; he had only joined up with us the day before! So he did not have much of the war.

That night my Company, No. 4, was brought behind the other three, and we lay on a road, bitterly cold—but I slept, as I had not had any sleep for two days or nights, and the exertion and the excitement of an advance take it out of you. I may say that we occupied the ridge that we set out to take in the morning; though our whole advance on the day's fighting was not more than half a mile. The next two days we lay under *very* hot fire from their heavy artillery. We fairly buried ourselves underground, but the result was that when a shell fell on the trench the whole thing collapsed, and the occupant had to be dug out pretty quick. It was very funny to see a man jumping about on a collapsed heap, prodding it with a spade and saying, "Where's yer face?"

I was going down to headquarters to look for stretcher-bearers when a shell fell bang in a trench containing the headquarters bicycles. One of them jumped at least 30 feet into the air in two halves, amidst a cloud of dust and sand. It was one of the funniest things I have ever seen.

I buried a cow here, and a horse a week later. It was rather a job. The poor animals were wandering about the deserted and usually ruined farms, wondering what had happened, what the noise was, and where their food and masters were. Occasionally a shell would

[1] Lieut. O. W. H. Leese, D.S.O., 5th (R.) Batt., wounded at Cuinchy and Ginchy.

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burst in the middle of a herd of cows, and would wound or kill them, but very often they would escape marvellously. After two days' shelling, the ground round our trenches was pitted with shell-holes like small-pox, or, as the soldiers say, a regular Gruyère cheese! The next day we relieved No. 3 Co. in the firing line. The Germans tried to advance, but our guns were splendid, mowing them down as they came on about 13,000 to the mile. I watched them all day. We had some very sporting shooting ourselves in the afternoon. We surprised about 40 of them with a burst of rifle-fire, and they ran behind a farm. Then I just got a few picked shots to shoot, and they tried one by one to get away; some bolted, some crawled, but I should think we got about 10 of them. It was very pretty shooting, and at 600 yards is more like sport than murder, though one does see things rather plainly through glasses—but you see them even more clearly when it is your own men. I should say the Germans lost nearly 500 men that afternoon, within my sight, from our gun-fire alone.

They made a big attack one night on our right. They screamed and shouted, making a noise like a lot of cats. I must say that it is rather bloodcurdling at night. They captured an empty trench, and then were heavily repulsed. We were relieved at about 8 o'clock by the French, and were told that we were to have a rest, but some news came up, and off we trekked till 3 o'clock, and finally got to a place called Zillebeeke (?). We were shewn a farmyard where we were told that we could sleep—in the open. We had arrived five minutes when a shell burst just outside. Nevertheless we could not have got the men on again, if they had burst in the middle of us. I know I could not have gone on. I have never been so tired and leg-weary. We had to

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get up at *seven*, and were hauled off again at eight, as the Germans had broken through the 2nd Division in the night and were quite close—and we had been going into billets; in fact, I had been actually given a piece of chalk and put on a bicycle and told to go off and mark the billets!

I saw a wonderful sight; the whole Brigade, with horse, guns and foot, were on a long piece of road about 3 miles, going up hill, so that you could get nearly the whole lot. There were troops all along the sides of the road, waiting to fall in, and I believe the whole Division was moving. We waited all day in a damp field, with nothing to do but wait for the Germans, who fortunately were repulsed before they got as far as us, and that night we actually got into billets. Beauchamp and I slept in the night-nursery, I in the nurse's bed and he in the baby's cot! We had to be up again at 4, so we did not get too long. B. told me that I had not been in bed half a minute literally before I gave my first snore. I have very seldom slept so soundly.

The next day we waited in our field again, all day waiting to advance.

It was Sunday, and we had five minutes' service. We expected a general advance at about 11.30, but we did not, as a matter of fact, move off until about 3.30. We advanced in artillery formation, and halted about a mile further on at the edge of a wood. We slept there that night. We got some straw from a barn, and would have been fairly comfortable, but it came on to pour, and we were very soon soaked to the skin. The next morning we were just getting a little vitality back, and I was lying, making up for lost sleep, between my platoon and the next one, when two beastly shrapnels burst over us, and killed one and wounded six in the

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platoon on one side of me and four on the other. I woke up with a jump. The rest of the day we spent in a big field in reserve, dodging shells. When they began to drop them over us, we moved 4 or 500 yards, until they picked us up again. That afternoon we saw an awful sight. An aeroplane was hovering about quite low over our guns, dropping lights in a very suspicious manner over our guns, which were being shelled. The H.L.I., on our right, opened fire on it, a perfect torrent of bullets. Suddenly one pierced its petrol tank, and it burst into flames. It began to come down a sheet of flames. Suddenly it looped the loop, and as it turned over the men fell out. The aeroplane went on, and came down half a mile away and burnt itself out.

We had a very good dinner that night, and ate one of your plum puddings. We can eat as many as you care to send. We had a glass of "Kümmel" each, one of your very good cigars, which arrived in excellent condition and which were generally admired. From my point of view, they were almost too popular. I must say we have so far always had enough to eat on this campaign, so it is the luxuries that we appreciate and which help a bit to counteract the Hardships and the Dangers, with a capital H and a capital D. It may sound absurd, but, owing to this, a box of chocolates is even more popular than a slab of chocolate, and sweets the same.

The whole of the next day we dodged shells, and in the evening we moved up to the trenches. That evening we had a lot of "back-chat" with the Germans, and one poor fellow was shot through the head. When things quieted down, I set about improving the trenches. As they were cutting a passage through the back wall of the trenches, they could not get through what they

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thought was a root. I struck a match, and found it was a puttied leg. I got the man properly buried immediately. But we soon spotted that this trench had been thrown up straightway, as they took the position, and they had not time to bury the bodies or even take them out of the walls of the trench. I thought something was wrong with my hole, and in the morning found I had been lying under a dead German. He was sitting up and not properly buried or anything. It took us two or three days to bury those in front and the men we kept finding in the wood behind. I could not have written all this last week, but I am getting more used to it all now. I had rather fun one day. I went with three other fellows into a spinney in front of a trench, where we got some very easy shots at the Germans until they realised where the bullets were coming from, when they gave the place a miss in balk.

I had two very narrow shaves in this lot of trenches. One morning the Germans were firing on us with rifle and machine gun fire. I went up to the H.L.I. trenches on our left and asked their right hand man to let me look out of his loophole. He was looking over my shoulder when his brains were blown out; so close was he, poor fellow, that his brains were actually on my shoulder. The same day, getting into the trench, I was knocked clean over by the explosion of a shell. We had a very bad time in those trenches, as they were enfiladed by a field-gun which they brought.

(The blue sheet comes before my other letter and this sheet comes after it.)

I was telling you about the field gun. I hope you don't mind my telling you about the "horrors," but if I don't, how can I describe to you the life we lead out

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here, which is what you want to know, isn't it? One shell from this beastly gun got our Sergeant-Major, a platoon sergeant (both of whom have been recommended for commissions), two corporals, one man and an artillery observer (who was observing from our trench). There is always a "mauvais quart d'heure" after these shell episodes, when the wounded lie in all directions, some bleeding, some groaning, some still. The "clearing up" is beastly, and I frankly own that I hate it. But it must be done, and someone has to do it. We lost about 20 men killed and wounded during the week in those trenches. Then we moved about 600 yards to some trenches much nearer to the Germans. Here we are worried out of our lives by what we call "bombs." They are fired out of a rifle, and only go about 250 yards, but unless there is absolute quiet you can't hear them coming. We lost in these trenches about 15 killed and wounded—of them four killed by snipers. I am afraid I am rather harping on the same subject, but then these are the chief episodes in our lives. You have heard of our poor 1st battalion; it is very sad.

We live absolutely underground, our roads and everything. My servant is a great man at making sign-boards, and our "bug-hutch" is labelled "Junior Bachelors' Club," the road leading to it "Paradise Alley." Then we have "Lovers' Lane" and several other little jokes, including the main communicating trench, which bears a notice, "This way to No. 3 Co.'s Kennels," "Beware of the bombs, please!" The "kennels" bear witness to the excellence of the trenches which I designed; each man had a little partitioned-off place, so that if a bomb or shell drops on it, it will only get him alone. If we lose them by fours and fives we

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shan't have any left soon, so we have to take precautions.

I am, as you see, in a new Company, with Vaughan for my Captain.

He is very nice, and we get on very well together. I now have to do 2nd in command in the Company, instead of only a platoon.

I have broken my wrist watch, also my electric torch refuses to work. I really ought to have a watch and a torch. . . .

Well, my dear Mother, I hope you are quite well.

I am really quite happy, but would not cry if peace were declared to-morrow.

Postcard.

November 20th.

Just had a very pleasant day, and without a casualty in the company. One of the officers, Brocklehurst, who was wounded before and came out again last week, was wounded to-day in the ankle. I wonder if he will come out once more.

Letter to Eustace Strong:

"Our trenches are in an indescribable state, and some of the old reservists, poor fellows, are quite suffering from it.

"I have just had a letter from Charlie, saying that he has joined me up here.

"We are just on the most forward point of the semi-circle round Ypres (the Germans know we are here, so it is all right!). The Germans have done all their attacks round us, but luckily we have a very strong position, and they dare not actually attack our

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battalion. There is only one thing that we are praying for, and that is that they should try and come against us—by day—and at a moment when we happen to be all up and at the loopholes. I believe our line is a lot strengthened now, and we have supports, but all the first part of the time they only had us to do for in order to get through. The Germans will find it very hard to get their big guns away when they retire, as the mud will come over their axles. . . .

"I admire the aeroplanists who are still going up, even in this weather, though, of course, not so much.

"We lost two more officers yesterday, one sick and the other shot in the ankle by a shell. We lose about 15 men a day in the battalion, so the wastage mounts up even when we are not actually advancing.

"We are much more cheerful than a week ago, as we feel things are going better, and we shan't be surrounded; the thought of that has been rather a nightmare."

Letter to the Rev. R. Bull:

November 20th.

After our attack at St. Julien's, which I daresay you read about, we were sent up to these trenches, where we have been ever since—living underground without any chance of exercise, and latterly ankle deep in mud and rainwater. We have been in them just on a month. I have had several washes in the water which has accumulated, and most of us have enough water for shaving.

This is a very anxious existence. There are two officers in the second battalion in the next trenches, only three hundred yards away, one a great friend, and we had not even set eyes on them for a week, when one of them

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paid us a visit at about 3.30 in the morning. We see the C.O. most days; he comes up from head-quarters by a communication trench, which is about a quarter of a mile long and about seven feet deep, the bottom foot being mud and water.

They have brought some Prussian Guards up to deal with us! The men are rather bucked. We shifted from some trenches a few hundred yards up the line, which were not nearly as pleasant as these, as they were thrown up under fire in a great hurry on the scene of an engagement, the consequence being that a good number of dead found a place in the wall of the trench. It was very unpleasant at first. My sleep, which is generally very limited in duration, was particularly fidgety that first night.

The worst time is the night-watch. My captain takes till twelve, when I am extricated from my hutch, and have to keep awake till dawn.

This is not so difficult as it sounds, as nowadays one's feet get much too cold to permit any dozing, once out of shelter.

My feet are my chief trouble. I pile on clothing, thick vest, cholera belt, two woollies, my tunic, a leather short coat, my "British warm," a scarf twice round my neck and woollen gloves—and then my beastly feet go and give the whole show away, and the worst of it is I don't see any chance of stopping it. The men have their little jokes, and keep their spirits up wonderfully, though sometimes their idea of humour is a little crude; for instance, just a moment ago, while I was writing you this letter the—to me awful—shout of "stretcher-bearer" brought me rushing out of my warm "bug-hutch" with a "first-field dressing" in my hand, to find an ex-butcher proudly displaying "another

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casuality" (*sic*) in the form of the hind quarters of a sucking pig, which had strayed too near our lines.

I cannot give you any news except that I believe the whole line has resisted the German attacks. All we want is to feel that there will be plenty more men to take our places, because, not being immortal or bullet-proof, we cannot last for ever, so if you know of anyone eligible for K.'s army who has not joined, I hope you will see that he does.

The Hampshire Yeomanry were quartered at Thornhill during this winter, until the Forest Row Huts were ready for troops, and their daily ride through the grounds of Hammerwood and their evolutions in the Park—when one day they "seized" the house—brought home the war even to the country people. The commandeering of George's hunter, "The Major," the passage of aeroplanes overhead and the going away of the first volunteers of that noble "Kitchener's Army" aroused some excitement in the stolid Sussex folk, but the idea that every man would be required before peace would be declared had never entered into their heads when George came home on his first leave. His letters had been a source of interest to the whole parish, but it was difficult to wake England up to the fact that we were at war!

Late in November George was able to get some leave, and as he liked to spend his time at Hammerwood undisturbed, he ordered the things he required in London on his way home, returning a day earlier than he was obliged, in order to collect them and to see other friends; in this he differed from his brothers, who always came home at once and then motored up for the day once or twice during their leave.

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He refers afterwards to what might have been a fatal accident, when he and Rita skidded into a stone wall in their little Studebaker, breaking the axle and having a long walk afterwards to the nearest station and a cold journey home by train.

He was fairly cheerful during this leave, but admitted that he had had to combine the duties of "parson, doctor and even gravedigger," and that the constant loss of friends was a great strain. The death of Captain Tritton at Christmas time, to which he refers in a later letter, affected him very much, as he had been under him for two months and was very fond of him.

Postcard.

December 2nd.

Arrived back quite safely. No adventures, but a horribly rough crossing. Came back here by motor-bus, and nearly had my throat cut by telephone wires which the engineers had put across the road. Played football yesterday afternoon with the 2nd Battalion, and played Bridge in the evening.

Yesterday evening Charlie turned up, looking very fit, and stayed half an hour. He is coming to lunch to-morrow. I was jolly glad to see him.

I lost half my luggage off the motor-bus, and the worst of it was that it was the half which contained parcels for my Captain.

In December, 1914, Mrs. Hartopp wrote:

"We met one of his brother officers yesterday, who told us how popular he was, always in good spirits and so brave."

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December 5th.

Just a little letter to tell you how much I enjoyed my time at home—it was simply ripping, and I loved just doing the ordinary things, going out shooting and even my unfortunate drive in the Studebaker. Rita was wonderfully brave when we skidded; it is a pity she can't come out here! . . .

We have been having a good long rest. Three weeks! . . . counting the one in England. We shall be as good—or better in many ways now—as when we left the country. To-day is Sunday; we are going to Church in about half an hour. I saw a lot of Charlie the other day, which was very pleasant; he seemed very well, but I wish he could get with his regiment, as it is rather rotten for him to be separated. I have played a good bit of footer lately, which has been very good for me. My Company is very good at it. We have also had several concerts. Although it is nice and safe here, yet in some ways it is more amusing in the trenches . . . but I do get a good bed here. The King came and saw us, but did not do anything particular. I expect by the time you get this we shall be back again in the trenches. I wonder what will be the next item on the programme. We shall just be well in it on Christmas Day—rather funny!

Well, nothing could have been nicer than Hammerwood the other day. I wonder when I shall do it again! In time for another shoot.

To his Aunts:

Xmas Eve—1914.

We missed a peaceful Xmas in billets that we had been hoping to get, and we are going up into the trenches to-night, so that we shall spend Xmas Day in

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them. I have been practising bomb throwing all the morning, a peaceful occupation! They really are deadly things. We shall be next the Indian troops I expect; they are all round here.

To his Mother:

"Just a line to give you my very best love and to tell you how much I should like to come and see you. We were going to have another week's leave, but it is in abeyance, as things are moving rather here.

"We have just come up after our rest; we met our 1st Battalion on the road with only four officers left."

Postcard.

Xmas Eve, 1914.

We have just missed having a peaceful Xmas. We did a 20 mile march the day before yesterday, and came up into reserve yesterday and are going into the trenches to-night. There is a very funny rumour that the Germans are pumping water into our trenches with a hose.

I have been practising bomb throwing all the morning, just to give the Germans a Xmas present. It won't be worth your while to sing much about "good will on earth" to-morrow! The trenches here are very wet. It snowed yesterday morning, and we were lying in a field.

I got a parcel from you this morning. Many Xmas wishes to the whole family.

To his Uncle:

December 23rd, 1914.

I am going to write you a grousing letter—to cheer up the invalid—because I must write to someone or die.

Really I think the next time I land in England I shall be popped straight into Bedlam; or if they can afford

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it and will spend the money on me, they will send me to some remote sea-side place with a keeper, where I shall walk up and down the promenade, smiling idiotically, or sit crouched up in the corner of one of those glass and wood shelters, glaring at the passers by.

Seriously I sometimes feel too morbid and sometimes too hysterical to be good for me. If I give you an account of the last week you may excuse me.

We left Meteren, where we had had a good rest, early in the morning, 7.15 to be exact, and marched and marched at least 20 miles. We, for the first time, passed through the Indians, which was interesting, but as we were told that their part of the line had been made too hot for them and they had not been able to hold their trenches, it rather damped our ardour. I don't blame them, as I believe the Huns concentrated on them purposely, so they must have had a pretty bad time. About 7 p.m. we got into the big town of Bethune, and were told we were going to be billeted there, probably remaining there the next day, the day before Xmas Eve. We were very tired, but we had a splendid billet, and Jimmy Horlick and I went out to forage. It was a splendid town for shops, notwithstanding the fact that they told us the Huns had put 900 shells into it (a lie I think). We bought chops, vegetables, two bottles of fizz, some chicory and daisy roots for salad, and also an onion, vinegar and oil, potatoes and apples and oranges. We had the best dinner of the war that night.

Companies 2, 3, 4 shared the billet, which meant that J. Horlick, Acland-Hood,[1] Allen Tritton, Ralph Wilmot,[2] Ipswich,[3] Vaughan and I were at the dinner. We

[1] Capt. F. P. Acland-Hood, M.C., 3rd Batt. Coldstream Guards.

[2] Capt. Sir R. H. S. Wilmot, Bart. (invalided).

[3] Lord Ipswich, 4th Batt. Coldstream Guards (Pioneers).

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had an excellent soup; the salad I prepared myself; I cut the chicory up and washed the green stuff, chopped the onion into 1000 little pieces and stirred the oil and vinegar up with it over and over again. Everyone liked it immensely, including myself—and had a second helping, including myself! Excuse the pride of an amateur chef; the fizz was quite good, and we did not have too much, two bottles between seven: the chops were good, and the pommes de terre, mashed and fried, and the mail came in. We were dogged tired, had fed well and retired to bed expecting a good rest. At 5 a.m. our servants waked us, and told us that the Battalion was leaving at seven. We hastily dressed, "shaved," breakfasted and paraded. I left a beautiful box of chocolates in my hurry, which had come in over night. We marched through thick fog out to the "sound of the guns that we hate so thoroughly"—as the reporter did *not* say of Lord Roberts—after about five kilometres we bivouacked in a field. On the way we passed troops coming out of the trenches; they were in thorough dèshabille, not one had a service cap, very few puttees, and most wore the fur coats and stocking caps, with their waterproof sheets cut into strips and wound round their legs right up to above the knees. And the stories they told the men! Luckily the Coldstream had "been there before," and refused to allow "the wind to be put up them," as they express it. These troops were coated with mud from head to toe, unshaved, and many of them soaking wet.

We remained in the open field all the morning during a snow-storm, which was unpleasant. The Prince of Wales came through, which was very sporting of him, and pleased the men. We got shelter in a barn in the afternoon, and that night we moved up into the firing-

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line, No. 4 Company going into some support trenches, and the rest of us being billeted in a little village immediately behind. A man in my Company was hit by a stray bullet on the road, and died the next day. We spent a bitterly cold night, with practically no sleep, and moved back before daylight to where we were the day before.

We dragged through the day somehow; I went and had a lesson in bomb throwing, which appeared to me to be very dangerous to the thrower. That was Xmas Eve, and that night we moved up to a little village half a mile behind the firing-line, and slept on the floor of an "estaminet" or pub. The next day there was a frost, and it was rather a nice sort of day, but foggy. A few bullets came over, but luckily no shells. We had a sort of Xmas dinner, but somehow did not get very jubilant, as we were going into the trenches at about four o'clock.

That evening we moved out and relieved the Grenadiers; they had been obliged to leave their front line of trenches, as they were flooded out, and one platoon had been blown up by a mine. They had lost about six officers and any number of men.

By-the-way, the evening before we got news of our unfortunate 1st Battalion's débacle; they took some trenches, but not being supported on their left, had to evacuate them, leaving their dead and wounded, 6 officers and 390 men, 3 officers killed and 3 wounded—a nice thing to hear on Xmas Eve.

To return to our own trenches: we found a communication trench a quarter mile long, and in fairly good condition owing to the frost. But the firing trenches, being freshly dug, were in an embryo state. In places they were so narrow that you could only move

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sideways, and so shallow you practically had to go on all fours. The Huns were sniping continuously. No. 4 and No. 2 were in the firing-line, but three sections of No. 3 filled in a gap between them, and I stayed to see them going. Our work was very much impeded by the fact that the Grenadiers left two wounded and two dead men in the trench; you can imagine how hard it was to get them out. We had to leave one dead man till the next night. There was also a dead Ghurka; we could not move him, as he had fallen in some water and was frozen in.

I got back about 12 p.m. to the billets very tired, and could not get anywhere to sleep; eventually I made myself fairly comfortable on some straw in a kitchen; I was pretty cold, but it was paradise compared with the trenches. I was back in the trenches by 1 a.m. the next morning; immediately I got back, word was passed down that A. T. had been shot through the head by a sniper. That is what affects one so. The fellow who had been my captain for two months, with whom I had walked the whole twenty miles from Meteren, and whom I had said good-night to eight hours before. In these trenches we have to keep our dead and wounded with us till dark. Mind you, I write this to you because you can realize how it gets on your nerves. Some people might think one was imaginative or nervy, but you know my temperament.

I went back about twelve to my company, and came back with them at dark, and relieved 4 and 2 with 3 and 1. Relieving takes well over an hour in these trenches. It was bitterly cold that night, freezing and just thawing alternately. We went on trying to improve the trenches; but digging was almost impossible, as the thawing clay clung to the shovel; the weather was

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much the same all the next day. The Huns had a thing called a Minnewerfer or Minnehaha opposite, which throws a bomb about 100 feet into the air. They were casting them at our 2nd battalion on the left; you see it coming through the air like a shot pheasant, and after it has fallen it explodes. You could see all the little heads along the trenches, expectantly watching with their faces upwards, and then where it falls there is a sauve qui peut. The Grenadiers had handed over some rifle-grenades to me, and as I am official bomb-thrower to my company, I thought this was the moment when I ought to use my knowledge. How I wished I had paid more attention to the engineer officer who explained the grenades to us. In fear and trembling I put one into a rifle; I screwed in the detractor—all my men had hidden safely behind a neighbouring traverse—and pulled the trigger. The grenade flew like an arrow and exploded about ten feet short of the Huns' trenches. My third shot exploded bang on the parapet, and I hope did some harm. After dark I fired off about four more, and as I was greeted with a fusillade from their trench, I hope I got fairly amongst them. These being our old second line of trenches and the Huns holding the Grenadiers' old first line, there are two communicating trenches joining our trenches with theirs. We have to keep a post out in these trenches to prevent their bomb-throwers coming up them. It was most exciting putting the post out the first night! The next two nights we went back about two miles to a billet. A very dirty estaminet, one room, sleeping on the floor, with the servants cooking and living in the same room, and a most disagreeable "patron"; but the Ritz after the trenches. Then the weather broke, and it poured with rain both nights. The next night we moved back

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into support, and I spent the night between twelve and five wading knee-deep in water up and down the communicating trench with hurdles and fascines for the men to stand on in the trenches. If I waded through it once, I went eight or nine times. I got back at 5.30, soaked to the skin, practically to the waist, and dead tired; I changed and had a good sleep.

Jim Corbet[1] came back that night; he was wounded before I came out. A shell burst about 60 yards from us as we were walking up the street; we heard it coming for two or three anxious seconds. It burst in a wine cellar! I also found a bullet in a post of the bed I was lying on that morning, but I think it must have been there before without my noticing it. I got it out as a souvenir. No. 3 went up into the trenches at 4.30 that night; first having to wade through the communicating trench, a bad beginning to twenty-four hours in the firing line. The trenches were in an awful state. The next day I was eating some food with Vaughan and Fielding when one of our own shells fell plumb into our own trench about 50 yards from us, and blew three men clean out of the trench about 15 yards. They were an awful sight, blown to pieces, and the trench was like a butcher's shop; another was wounded, and a stretcher-bearer shot who tried to reach him. It rained most of the day! We had to get all those fellows away after dark. I think you must begin to realize what makes one feel so bad at times. Also, as I passed battalion headquarters after being relieved, I saw a body on a stretcher, covered with a fur coat, and was told that it was "Mr. Tritton," who I did not know had been killed, though I knew he was hit. I went to his

[1] Lieut. Sir R. J. Corbet, Bart., killed in action at Givenchy, 15th April, 1915. Mentioned in despatches.

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funeral this morning. There were six others too being buried. Eric Gough,[1] in the Irish Guards, was an awfully nice fellow; he was killed the day before. Geoff. Hopley,[2] who came out to the Grenadiers, was in the Company that relieved us. Rather funny!

Do you remember Wynburg? How I wish I were starting on that trip now.

One of the awful things in this sort of life is that it is so difficult not to get on one another's nerves; it is pretty awful when one thinks that a fellow might be killed the next minute. Till now I have got through most of my troubles by thinking, "well, it must come to an end some time," but I only see one end to this. I really don't know if I can stand another month of it, much less a year. I got through the first months by the excitements and novelty of it, and as that has worn off, it leaves only the funk and the danger. This is a very grousing letter, but it has done me a lot of good, and I feel better already, so please excuse it.

Christmas Day.

You ought to have this framed, with glass back and front. (He enclosed the Christmas card which had been sent to him by the King and Queen, which he much valued.—M. W.) We came up here about half a mile behind the firing line, and spent the day here. We go into the trenches just after dark this evening about 4.30. I believe they are very bad ones. Our first battalion has just been cut up again. I should be all right myself, but I have an awful cold, which does not make you feel

[1] Lieut. Eric Gough, Irish Guards, killed in action, 30th Dec., 1914.

[2] Lieut. G. Hopley, Grenadier Guards, died of wounds, April, 1915. His brother, John Hopley, wounded July, 1916.

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like fighting. Much love to all, and best Christmas wishes from

GEORGE.

To his brother Seymour:

"Thank you very much for your letter and things. I wonder how you are getting on. Can you run your guns into action, unlimber and poop off all in half a minute, or are you one of those chaps who do intricate decimal calculations on a map, take ten minutes to prepare the gun, and then miss the target by three miles?

"We shall want you out here soon, my dear Seymour, although at present we seem to have very much the best of them, from the artillery point of view, and I hope we shall continue to do so; it is most uncomfortable to be inferior in that arm.

"There was a terrific bombardment last night at about 4 o'clock; I don't know what it was all about, but probably they heard through spies or something that there were large reinforcements in some village opposite us. I know it woke me up, and I was sleeping very soundly.

"It is snowing hard, and I go up into the trenches this afternoon at 4.30, and they are not the best of places in a snowstorm.

"Have you had much shooting at Hammerwood? You have not much longer now to shoot. Let me know some time how long Charlie has got in England; really the cavalry have got a soft job; they have done nothing since the retreat, except the brigade which held the Germans up in Belgium, before we got to 'Wipers,' and the few squadrons that went into trenches in front of Wipers. But the time will come when they will be

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hoicked—and they will need some hoicking—out of their warm billets and made to pursue a retreating enemy, who will leave ambushes all along the roads!

"Best of luck in 1915."

Jan. 13th, 1915.

Just a line on one of the postcards you sent me to thank you for your parcel. I have enough bandages now, so please don't send any more for the present. Derek arrived last night, and came to lunch to-day. It is splendid having him out here, though it adds to one's anxiety. I wonder how Charlie is getting on.

"I wanted to put some wire up in front of our trenches, and I spotted my chance the other evening. I got a P.O. officer and two of our young ones who had just come out, and told them that it was quite the usual thing to do; so I got them out here, and we did three good hours' work, and put up quite a lot of wire. They seemed rather surprised, and perhaps just a little nervous, but they naturally did not like to say much. Luckily I did not have any casualties among my engineers. We have got a little more trench to look after, and the new piece runs quite close (about 50 yards) to the Huns. We can hear them talking and singing, and they must be very deaf if they don't hear us, as our men spend most of their spare moments hurling insults at them. I haven't noticed much of that Christmas-time feeling in our battalion; they have been out too long and suffered too much for much friendly spirit to have survived.

"We have a new idea now, and that is not to shoot into the parapet of the Huns' trench directly in front, but to aim well over, so as to hit the rations parties and generals and any reserve companies who, thinking they

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are out of sight, also imagine they are out of mind. Don't mention it, as if the Huns heard of it, they might do the same to us.

"I am back second in command of the company again, as Longueville[1] is gone to command number 4, as Horlick has retired from the fray and has got a job as Divisional Ma——."

To his Mother:

Feb.

Just a line to prelude a letter. I am afraid I haven't written much lately. When we came here the division before us had been getting it very hot, and our 2nd battalion and the Irish Guards were attacked almost the first day, but with us and the Grenadiers in support they drove the Huns back about 60 yards up the railway embankment. Then we relieved them in the trenches, and attacked the Huns and pushed the whole line back about three hundred yards and captured the brick stacks we wanted. The whole thing has been very tiring, and I have needed all the spare time I could get to rest, so I haven't had time to write. I am feeling very well.

Received Feb. 23rd.

Just a line, as the men say, to tell you that I am in the pink, and hoping this finds you as it leaves me.

Then they go on to describe how they have charged and bayoneted at least ten Germans off their own bat, when they probably have not seen one for a month.

I want to see another spring. I saw a bush yesterday that, with encouragement, might start. Tell Rita how much I enjoyed her photographs of Hammerwood, though they did make me a bit—well, I should like to be there.

[1] Major Longueville, D.S.O.

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We had a draft of 100 men—dead secrecy—out yesterday luckily, so my platoon is filled up again. They look very good.

To his Aunt:

Received Feb. 14th.

Thank you so much for your letters and the things you send. They have all been most acceptable, so much so that I am going to ask you to send me some more! You remember the fur gloves on a string; they are awfully good, and if you could find two more pairs, I should like another, and a subaltern in my company would like a pair very much too. The other subaltern wanted a pair too, but he was killed two days ago. We made an attack, and he was watching the result of our artillery fire and got shot through the head by a sniper.

We got on very well, and make quite a lot of ground on our front and on the Irish Guards' front. As our 3rd Battalion had done the same two days ago, we haven't done so badly lately. We are fighting in a brickfield between Cuinchy and La Bassée, where some of the heaviest fighting of the war has taken place. The place has been taken and re-taken eight times during the last few months, and the division we relieved alone lost 500 men there. It is a key to this part of the line, which enables us to hold on to coal mines and several valuable things like that that the Huns want to get.

I saw Chapman, looking as well, if not better, than ever before in his life. He seems to have a pretty "soft job," as he was driving a most luxurious motor car.

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Postcard.

"It is, I am afraid, a long time since I wrote to you. We have been here between Cuinchy and La Bassée for about a fortnight, doing forty-eight hours in and forty-eight hours out. This is not quite so peaceful as it sounds, because when you are relieved you are very wet and tired, and can only crawl back to billets at about 11 p.m., and then you sleep most of the next day, and start again at three p.m. the day after. We have had two proper fights lately. The first time the 2nd battalion took a post on the railway embankment and went 60 yards beyond it; the second time the 3rd battalion brought the whole line forward past some brick stacks we wanted. It was really rather a creditable affair, but I have never been so tired in my life. When you have captured your ground, you immediately have to dig trenches to hold it. I enclose a 'Times' account of the first day's fighting."

There was a long account in *Times* of Feb. 8th of this fighting.

One extract from the newspaper account was:

On the night of the 5th-6th we made a successful attack on two German sap-heads in the brickfields south of the La Bassée Canal.

From these vantage points a further advance was carried out on the 6th. At 2 p.m. our artillery and that of the French concentrated their fire on the German defences among the brickstacks and the area beyond. Our heavy howitzers took part in this bombardment, their fire being directed on the railway triangle.

The boom of the latter pieces and the detonations of their shell were audible twenty miles away, above the roar of other artillery, while to those close at hand the shrieking of the great

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projectiles through the air was most impressive, as were the volumes of smoke and debris thrown up.

Lyddite's Havoc.

The effect of the lyddite shells was truly terrific, one house being blown bodily into the air; and as they burst among the brickstacks they created great havoc among the enemy.

At 2.15 p.m. an assault was launched against a strong position or "keep" among the stacks of bricks held by the Germans. Our storming columns rushed the work from three sides at once, and captured it with very little loss, for—as prisoners afterwards stated—the noise of bursting shells was so great, and the clouds of dust with which the defenders were surrounded were so thick, that they did not observe our men advancing until too late.

At the same time the trenches to the north of this point, between it and the canal, were stormed by another party. By seizing these points we were enabled to occupy a continuous line southwards from our forward post on the canal, which formed an advantageous position in front of the brickfields.

We captured nineteen unwounded prisoners, in addition to many wounded, a trench mortar, and a machine gun. The Germans left seventy dead on the ground, while our casualties were insignificant.

The Germans, however, showed no inclination to accept this reverse, for in the early hours of the 7th a body of them advanced along the canal bank, shouting out, "Don't shoot; we are engineers." This form of stratagem, unfortunately for the enemy, has now lost its novelty.

Our men held their fire until the supposed sappers were only a few yards away, and then opened with a machine gun, with a result that the "engineers" fell back, leaving thirty dead bodies in front of our line. In the afternoon another attack was attempted, but it melted away under our artillery fire, and did not arrive at close quarters.

Demoralised Enemy.

Our artillery has obtained such an ascendency that after the assault on the 6th our troops were actually able to put up

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barbed wire entanglements in front of their trenches in broad daylight without being fired at by the enemy's infantry.

The prisoners captured here were despondent and much shaken.

To his Mother:

"I sent grandmamma the other day a newspaper cutting of the first affair the Brigade had when it arrived here, and herewith I enclose you another of what we did the next day. The piece I underlined is where my company were holding; so it was as well for us the attack was successful, or we would probably have been counter-attacked or left stranded.

"We have now brought the line, which was broken when the 1st Division were here, back to an improvement on the original line, and with remarkably few casualties. Colonel Dormer was in my company; we had another officer, Tyrrell,[1] killed yesterday. Northland was killed the first night we went up there; I had just spoken to him. He came out with me from Windsor, if you remember. We were shelled very heavily yesterday and the day before. I lost about twelve men in my platoon.

"We had 32 shells in our company in about half an hour.

"It has rained as well most of the time.

"After our attack I had to dig the trench to hold the new piece of ground. It took all night; luckily we weren't attacked, but it is rather nervy work, and the ground was an absolute bog. There was an 'independent leg' which I kept falling over in the dark, and which got on my nerves. The ground up there is

[1] Second Lieut. F. C. Tyrrell, Died of wounds at Bethune, 16th Feb., 1915.

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not only covered with dead, but full of them as well. They stick out of the trenches everywhere, and when the earth falls away from them the men plaster clay over the part that sticks out. By working very hard we have carried away most of the dead behind our trench or else buried them, but when we first went up there were several hundred in every stage of 'deadness.' The other night Longueville, my fellow subaltern, in digging unearthed a head, and when he switched his torch on, he found it was a German still wearing pince-nez!

"I went up to the advanced post directly we had taken it; it was raining, and the water lay in bright yellow and red puddles all over the ground—yellow from the lyddite shells and red from blood. The place was blown to pieces and full of dead—English and German; the German were all blown to pieces—heads and arms off. I went up there later in the day, and found No. 1 Company had worked very hard, and some of the dead were collected and stacked in a hollow behind, about 50 yards long and 6 deep!

"I also went round the captured German trenches by the brick kilns; they were eight or nine feet deep and very dry, blocked in places by dead Germans our men had shot and bayoneted. We found lots of cigars, which our men appreciated—after the attack all our men dug with cigars in their mouths. We also found equipment and blankets and things. We captured, say, 100 rifles and 2 machine guns. We had two of the biggest bombardments of the war; 100 or more big guns all firing at once and the Germans replying; the roar is continuous, and the air gets smoky and foggy, like a very bad London fog. All the night after one could hear the German wounded groaning and calling out between the lines. Such is War! These exciting

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moments are really the best of it. What I hate most is the night, thinking they are going to rush the trenches—and probably a downpour of rain, and the legs and arms poking out of the sides of the trench.

"I am feeling very well, but will welcome a rest. Had it not been for all this, I would have been home this week for leave."

About March 1st.

Please thank Rita very much for the photographs of Switzerland, which I enjoyed getting very much indeed. By Jove! that does seem a long time ago. I did enjoy it though, and I am jolly glad now that Charlie and I had that time together. Uncle Theodore said we would never regret it. I never thought then how true his words would prove to be.

I don't know what gave you the impression that we were out of the trenches yet. We are hoping—S-sh! to be relieved quite shortly. And also to get some leave. Anyway I am going to keep my head very low for the next few days. And you might as well get some clothes ready. The ones which are in the Swiss hotel will want to be sent to Sullivan and Aitcheson to be pressed, I expect. Nana will know what I want. My evening clothes and some shoes and underclothes. Also my bowler hat and umbrella and great coat. I hope it won't be tempting Providence too much, but still England is not much use to you if you have to lie in bed all day in a pair of borrowed pyjamas because you have no clothes to wear.

I went and paid Derek Gunston a visit the other day, as they are in the next trenches to us. He was very well, and enjoying himself. I have got beyond that stage; though I am very happy at present and "no complaints."

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Later:

"With any luck I will be in London on Wednesday morning in time for breakfast!!!"

His family were at this time in a house in London, 3 Queen's Gate, in order to be near Seymour, who was then training at Fulham. George thoroughly enjoyed his leave, his temperament enabling him, when donning "mufti," to don also certain of the feelings of a civilian, and although he was certainly less cheerful at the prospect of leaving than in the autumn, he was able to get considerable enjoyment out of his stay in England.

He went down to Hammerwood for the day to see his Uncle and Aunt at the Vicarage, and managed to shake hands with most of his friends on the place.

His kindness to dependents is shown by a little incident that happened during this leave. When quite a small boy he and his brother had been partly the plague and partly the amusement of a young schoolroom maid, who had left after seven years and who had eventually married a military picture-dealer. Falling on bad times through the war, she had written to ask if George would buy an old print of the Coldstream Guards from them. His Mother bought it for him, and he saw it on his return home in March. Shortly afterwards the maid brought a parcel, with the following note:

"The picture is for Mr. George. A few days ago I was very pleased and surprised to get a letter from him, enclosing a cheque for £2, asking me to look out for another Coldstream print. He put it in such a very nice way, as though it would be a favour for him instead of the other way about, but I could see the kind thought through

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it. Not many young gentlemen would have troubled to have done such a thing, and my husband thinks the same. It was such a nice letter too. . . . Mr. George also said he thought 'pictures of regiments would be popular after the war,' and he is right, for they were before."

George had written her a charming little letter full of reminiscences of old days, and when acknowledging it to him she says:

"The one thing that used to worry me about you the most was that you were so fond of reading that I was always afraid you would be late for breakfast; you used to clean your teeth with the brush in one hand and a book in the other."

Seymour[1] left England for France towards the end of March. As was usual with the Whidborne boys when leaving Southampton, he managed to get in a visit to his grandparents. His grandfather wrote:

Moorhill,
21st March, 1915.

Seymour in his khaki, with his sweet, tender and yet happy expression, I shall never forget. . . . He left us with gentle smiles, as if he was going to an enjoyable cricket match. I saw a great likeness in him to his father—even more than usual—that look of Ferris of *inward* kindness I remember so well.

He was quartered near George at Bethune, and the brothers were delighted to meet one another occasionally.

[1] Lieut. B. S. Whidborne, M.C., attached Heavy Trench Mortar Battery, R.F.A.T. Military Cross, Jan., 1917.

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He returned home on leave in the end of July, and the three brothers were all in England at the same time, though they were not at Hammerwood together, owing to Charlie's being at Carlton House Terrace recovering from his wound.

George wrote the following P.C. on his way back to France:

Folkestone,
March 7th.

Here I am on the boat. I hope I shan't meet any submarines, as it is cold enough *out* of the water.

I *did* enjoy my four days' rest. I must get a couple of nights' sleep at Bethune if I can.

Later:

March 13th.

Well, I am back again with a vengeance, as you will have seen by the time you get this.

What a good time I had, though hardly a rest-cure; this time last week was my first evening in London; I had just had a hot bath and had put on a clean boiled shirt! To-night I am going to try to sleep on the floor (paved) of a dirty estaminet. I could have done with another three or four days in England, though I suppose I must not complain. Please thank the chauffeur for being so busy and cheerful when I was at home, and say good-bye to Nana for me, as I think I missed her.

To his Uncle:

March, 1915.

I plunged into things directly I got back. If I had known how soon I was going to start, I would have taken a little more rest while I was at home. As a

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matter of fact, I have had only one night's sleep since I have been back.

I rather think we are really embarked on a big move at last, at any rate there won't be much rest for some time now. I enjoyed my four days immensely, though if I had longer I would have had a long night in bed, a late breakfast, and then a day in an armchair. As it was I could not afford the time for that luxury. My morning's golf was the nearest approach to normal peace conditions, and I enjoyed it. Things are drying up; the sun and the warmer weather really will make all the difference to us, both in the trenches and in billets.

March 27th, 1915.

I bought some packets of seeds in Bethune yesterday to sow in the trenches; though I don't suppose we shall be in these trenches when they come up. "Longtail" and I have a very pretty little idea; we each carry a packet of seed in our pockets, and whichever has to put the other under first sprinkles some over the spot!

It is raining regular spring rain this evening. The last time I was in the trenches it snowed hard most of the night and was very cold. It was Sunday, and the men had a lot of work to do in the trenches; they called it "Sandbag Sunday," and the next day, as they were going to be in billets, "Bag holiday."

April 1st, 1915.

Things are going on rather peacefully at present; we are doing our forty-eight hours in and our forty-eight hours out regularly, and as the weather is good, we think we can manage it all right. At any rate there is no prospect of any relief.

Seymour's division has arrived out here I know,

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because whom should I see walking down our trench the other day but Ryder;[1] he was coming up to see what a trench was like, and was being shown over by our Adjutant, Smith (a young Granville), who is his cousin. He had not seen Seymour, but he must be in the country, as they are in the same division; I am afraid I may not see Seymour, as he probably won't come up to the trenches, for the Artillery only come up to the trenches to "observe" the effect of their shell fire, and I don't think Seymour does that.

I never thought we should all be out here together. There is not another male Whidborne to come out now!

They are preparing the Territorials very well and breaking them in.

They send them up a company at a time, and they are interspersed in a seasoned battalion in the trenches, so that they come to it gradually and also pick up all the tips that we have had to discover by experience. We have the Post Office Rifles with us; they seem a very good lot, and their officers are very nice, most of them. Among them I found an old friend of mine, Lawrence and his brother; they live near Hammerwood, and one was up at Cambridge with me. The Post Office had a great score, which pleased them awfully; one of their officers, Gore Brown, was hit by a stray bullet in the fore-arm almost directly they got out (he was coming up alone before his battalion to be introduced to a trench), so the Post Office Rifles will figure in the Roll of Honour before any battalion in their division, and what makes it better, even before another rival battalion of theirs, which has not had a

[1] Lieut. Algernon Dudley Ryder, M.C., R.F.A. Won the Military Cross for services at Visny Ridge, May, 1915. Wounded three times.

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single casualty yet. Some shells burst over our trenches the other day, and got six of our fellows and six P.O. Rifles; this pleased them immensely, and they felt they were making quite a splash in the Casualty World!

April 9th, 1915.

There is little or no news. I had two letters this morning, one from Charlie and one from Seymour. S.'s was really very funny; he said quite happily that all his horses "are cheerfully dying from various ailments."

Charlie is still doing nothing, and seems bored. I should be bored if I did not realize that it is the safest thing you can be doing out here. We are still doing forty-eight hours in and forty-eight hours out. Danger is almost, but not quite, eliminated by very long communication trenches. There is at least a mile from Bn. H.Q. to the very foremost fire trench, in which you can go five foot below ground all the way. The trenches were getting quite dry again at the end of last month, but we have had rather heavy and continuous rain since April set in, and they have got very bad again, though, of course, it is not the same as in December and January, when they seemed hopeless.

There is rather a nice little copse at the back of our billets, very much like those "shaws" at the back of Thornhill. The undergrowth is cut and the bank covered with anemones and violets, just like Hammerwood ones, and lots of little birds like the Hammerwood ones, tits and finches. Except that the place is infested with Indians, who keep some mules near by, one might imagine oneself at home—still Abdy rather accustomed me to a black face in an English country setting.

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April 13th.

There is still nothing much to tell you, luckily. We had a very fine and peaceful Easter. To give the Huns their due, they did observe Easter, and there was hardly a shot fired from either side and hardly any gunning. They also seem to keep more quiet on Sundays. We were going up into the trenches on Easter Sunday afternoon, and in the morning several of us rode into Bethune to a service which the Bishop of London was advertised as going to hold. The theatre was crammed, but there was no Bishop, and no excuse or reason given for his absence. I wonder if you could find out why.

Please thank Baby very much for her Easter egg, which I ate at one sitting in a "fire trench."

We are getting quite full of officers now, almost too full; if it goes on, the battalion will have to get "cut up" again to make life worth living.

You know Derek has appendicitis and is back in London.

The second battle of Ypres was between the 13th and the end of April, and the following letters show a little what our armies had been undergoing:

April 30th, 1915.

I have seen Seymour twice; he is very well and doing splendidly. He really is jolly good, and has done very well with his material. It was very nice seeing him. His Colonel seems a very nice and very able man. . . .

We are having really hot summer days, as hot as England generally is in August. I have sent a parcel with some winter things in it back.

We have had an awfully bad two days in the trenches.

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In my company we had four killed and about ten wounded and shaken. I had some very narrow shaves: once I saw a bomb fall into the trench, and only just had time to get behind a traverse before it burst. We also had a good deal of trouble with a mine, into which either the Huns were pumping gas or gas was oozing out of the earth, which had been given off by the high explosive shells.

This place, Givenchy, is, I should say, tunnelled with mines; it is like living on a volcano; we have exploded two and the Germans two. Our old friend Quinchy is also a mass of mines.

Really, modern warfare is a bit thick, and this gas they are using up North! We have handkerchiefs in water always ready.

They have also got a wonderful new thing, which throws an enormous bomb into the trench, charged with high explosives. It makes a six foot hole in the solid earth, so that it is no use getting into a dug-out. . . .

If there is any asparagus in the garden to spare, it would be very acceptable. I think it would travel all right, also Jerusalem artichokes. . . .

There is greatly increased activity even down here. Up at the old Ypres it seems rather warm. Did you see we lost and retook our old friend St. Julien. They have had a rotten time up there, but I think things are going all right. I have not heard from Charlie for some time. I suppose he is all right. I am afraid this letter is very disjointed, but it is so hot I don't feel like writing.

About May 15th.

Just a line. We shall be all right. It may not "take" us as a battalion; I don't know yet. I am

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feeling very well to-day, after a day's rest. Weather lovely. Will write again.

The following letter was a day or two later:

"I am afraid you must be having an awful time of suspense with these enormous casualty lists; the thing is to realize that we—for I am sure Charlie and Seymour feel exactly the same as I do—don't mind what happens. I should very much like to get back to England, but if not, there are worse things that happen to you than 'pro patria mori.' I should not dare to say this in words, but I mention it as I feel it might cheer you up a bit. I am afraid my letter is a bit morbid, but the —— Division failed in their attack yesterday, and we have just heard that we have got to go down to do it. You need not get worried, as if you have not heard anything by the time you get this, we shall be all right. We have been in the trenches here eight days; we were put here because it was the important spot and had to be held at all costs. At one moment I was the right-hand man of the whole British line. The French advanced splendidly, and I had a wonderful view from the top of a . . . (censor). I could also see the bombardment, but not nearly so well.

"An aeroplane came over just before the sun got up, but it was flying too low, and the Huns brought it down by rifle fire. It came down like a duck with a broken wing, the passenger trying to work the steering from behind, and fell in the no-man's land between the French and German trenches. The Huns immediately put two shells into it, and it burst into flames. It was an awful sight, but not as bad as the one I saw at Ypres in October. The Huns fairly cheered, but to punish them during the next two days I put 90 trench mortar

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bombs, about 30 rifle grenades and about 20 hand bombs into the trenches opposite us. I don't mean I actually sent them myself, but I instigated an active offensive in that line, and I know we got some casualties. I have just heard that the aeroplanist was a Captain Fox, and he volunteered to go over low to find out the strength of the Huns in the trenches opposite—wonderfully brave!

"I must tell you the story of Merton the Mouse. . . . We had a sap running forward out of our fire trench, quite close to the Huns. Well, the other morning two of our bombers were sleeping in it. One woke up and saw a little mouse curled up asleep on the leg of the other. 'Very cushy,' he said he was. Well, Merton, at least his name was not Merton then, as I will explain, woke up, and instead of rushing away, looked round calmly and then disappeared down a hole toward the German line. This aroused the suspicion of one of the bombers, who is rather a wag, and the conclusion was arrived at that Fritz, as he was then christened, was a German spy, and that he should have a hand grenade flung at him next time he was encountered. Luckily for Merton he appeared again almost immediately as the Bombers were having breakfast, and looked so innocent that all suspicion was allayed, and he was given a piece of bread, which he took back into his sap. Soon after I appeared myself, and wishing to make Merton's acquaintance, we thought that he might come for a little cheese to eat with his bread. Well, this well-known temptation succeeded, as I believe it has done before, in bringing the mouse out. He came bold as a lion straight to us, and then I am bothered if he didn't sit up and beg! Well, here's luck to Merton, and if the mine which he lives over is blown up, may he be paying

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a distant visit at the moment. Well, here's luck to us all, and my very best love to my darling mother and all the family."

His brother Charles had spent Christmas in hospital with an attack of measles. He had taken part in both battles of Ypres, but between the fighting he had so much disliked the inactivity of the cavalry life that he had joined the R.F.C. as "Observation Officer."

From his brother Charles:

No. 5 Squadron,
2nd Wing, R.F.C.,
May 17th.

I am wondering very much what sort of a time you have been having lately. I applied to be attached to the R.F.C. as observer, as I thought it would be more interesting than doing nothing behind, though ever since the Ypres show began "they" have been in the trenches—I did about a week with them there and then came to this. I saw a lot of flashes down in your direction when I was out yesterday morning, though I don't think they could have been quite as far as you. I wish they had sent me down to your bit of the line.

Unfortunately I am just as far away as I could be. I have only done one long reconnaissance so far, which was about 20 miles over the line. Our usual round is only about 4 miles over. I hear Seymour is quite close to you. Is he still on the Ammunition Column? I hear that his Division is making a push. I hope by the time you get this you will be well in front of La Bassée and will have bagged thousands of Bosches.

I am beginning to get a very good notion of the sensations of a pheasant; he must have a rotten time.

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By-the-way I came across Kincaid Smith the other day, whom you knew in S. Africa; he says that he smokes the same cigarettes as those you brought back from Zanzibar. He said he liked them so much that he has smoked them ever since.

I also saw your Colonel for a few minutes when I was leaving the trenches, and I asked him for news of you. He said a lot of nice things about you, and I must congratulate you on the mine episode. I hope they haven't used the gases on you much; I had just a taste of it the other day, and I could not see for about two hours. . . ."

Letter from George: About June 12th.

I do indeed owe you a letter and some news. I think after my last letter we had been taken out of the firing line at Guinchy and put in reserve to the other two Brigades of the 2nd Division at Festubert. The 5th and 6th Brigades broke the line by a night attack, and made a hole in it. The 7th Division, on their left, made a simultaneous attack, which was not quite so successful, though the 20th Guard's Brigade did very well; the Battalion of Scots Guards in it went right through, and we ultimately found a lot of them, I should say a quarter of a mile on, with two officers, Marsham Townsend, I think, and Denis Stephenson. They had obviously attacked some Huns who were retiring down a communication trench, and, I should say, had been enfiladed by a machine gun, anyway they were all lying in a line by the side of the trench.[1]

Very bad luck; the weather broke just the next day, and the guns were not able to pick up their targets.

[1] There is a beautiful little poem describing this incident in *Festubert and Other Poems*, by Wynne Sewell.

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So as the chief difficulty, once you have broken the line, is machine guns in houses, which must be knocked out by guns before you can advance, the whole affair had to put the brake on.

I think it was the next day we moved up about one and a half miles to a village we had been at in January. In the evenings I had been there before I was sent on a bicycle, on ahead to see if there were any new approaches to the firing line, and roughly to see how things were. The roads were very muddy and crowded with traffic; I passed the estaminet we had stopped in at Le Touret in January, and went up the Rue Epinette. The estaminet I spent the first half of Xmas Day in was a dressing station, and was crowded with a line of stretchers waiting outside. The road was full of artillery, relieved and relieving battalions, small parties of very ragged looking and muddy men who had lost their battalions in the attack, and with long processions of ambulances. It was drizzling and very cloudy and cold. I got right up to where our old trenches had been and where the attack had been made from; there was no rifle fire, and only a few casual shells—everyone, I suppose, was busy digging. Suddenly I found my bicycle was bunged up with mud and would not work—at that moment a shell fell in the ditch beside me (luckily it did not burst), and a sudden burst of wind from the Huns sent a shower of bullets into the wall of a ruined brewery behind me. I picked up my bicycle, and my orderly, whose bike had also struck, did the same. We doubled back to a handy dressing station, and washed our bicycles in a puddle and got them to work. . . . After finding out one or two more "routes," I rode home and had a good dinner. I had passed the Irish and Grenadiers going into the trenches or rather going

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to relieve the Brigades which had attacked and who had not proper trenches. In trying to go on a bit further the Irish lost, I think, 17 officers and 300 men, and the Grenadiers 5 officers, including their Colonel and a Major, and about 150 men. The whole Division, that is the 5th and 6th and our Brigade, lost 186 officers and I don't know how many men. Anyway they made the biggest break in the line since Neuve Chapelle, and made it after having been in the trenches continuously beforehand. And that is not all. We went up two nights later and relieved the Grenadiers, and the 2nd Battalion were on our left. The post is just going, so I will send it off unfinished.

Arrived June 26th, 1915.

There is not anything very exciting happening just now. We have not enough ammunition to do anything. It is very annoying hearing the French pounding away day and night, and to feel we are letting them do all the dirty work. They really are doing splendidly. I believe they have got forward 4 miles, on a 5 mile front. I suppose it is not any use our trying to do anything big if we have not enough ammunition, as it would only be what you would call a needless loss of life.

It is awful to think that to-morrow is the longest day in the year and that after that the days get shorter and shorter and the nights longer. As a matter of fact, we have nearly 4 more months of quite decent weather before the rain starts.

I wonder if we shall be the other side of La Bassée this winter or still on this side. We have not got very far in our great spring offensive!

The days go by very quickly at this game. All seems

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more or less peaceful, and you would hardly have thought it was worth £3,000,000 a day to the country.

This is our interpreter's idea of a chic writing paper! How do you like it?

I have seen Seymour once or twice since he has been posted to the battery. He is very happy about it; he has a much more amusing job and a much less arduous one. In plain English "a slacker time." He was observing from the top of a slag heap when I went to visit him. He was burnt a lobster colour, and had a thin film of coal dust over his face—but was very happy. How would it be to see if the strawberries would travel here as well as the asparagus did?

Card from George's mother:

"I have heard from Charlie. He has left where he was; one does feel anxious. He says he saw George's late colonel: 'He told me George had done very well—and was a jolly good officer!—that he had recommended him for the "Miner's Medal," as George had rescued 2 or 3 men who had been asphixiated from a mine, and had been overcome by the gas himself. I thought he should have recommended him for the V.C. myself! Is not this good news? Seymour writes on a postcard too 'that George has been doing great deeds!'"

During the last ten years before the war the easiness of transit had caused many people to lead almost a kaleidoscopic existence, and George, with his mercurial nature, felt the inactivity of trench life more than many men; people speak sometimes of the excitement of the life at the front, but this is only at certain times, and in between it is deadly dull.

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George really preferred sometimes to take risks, and it was not surprising to those who knew this trait to hear that he had been wounded whilst putting up barbed wire between our side and the enemy.

Choques,
No. 1 Clearing Station Hospital.

I expect I shall see you in a day or two. I had a bomb thrown at me, and a piece of shrapnel stuck in my right thigh. It is not out yet, but it is a very slight wound. I will let you know what hospital I get to in London directly I get there. I don't suppose it will keep me in for ten days, if it goes on all right. Then, I should think, I might get a week at home and then 10 days at Windsor and then come out again.

The news that George had been mentioned in despatches, followed by the award of the Military Cross, reached Hammerwood House on June 23rd, and caused great pleasure, which, however was turned into sorrow and anxiety the same evening when a telegram arrived saying that "Lieutenant" Whidborne had been wounded on June 21st.

This anxiety was alleviated by a letter on the 25th saying that the wound was a "cushy" one, and that the hero would soon be in England.

Congratulations and condolences poured in during the following days, for his name was three times in the papers during the week; some people had only seen that he was wounded, whilst others had only noticed the honours that he had received.

His Captain, to whom he was devoted, wrote him a charming letter, with which he was much pleased:

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June 23rd.

My dear Widders,

I am so sorry you were wounded the other night, and in such a very unlucky manner too, but, thank heaven, it is no worse, and I must congratulate you on being still alive.

The men are much upset. . . . They all regret you very much, and speak in very glowing terms of you; however, they are glad to hear you will have a good rest in England, and say you deserve it after doing so much work. They say you were *too daring*, but "one thing about him, he never asked you to go where he would not go himself." . . .

Well, I do not know how I shall get on without you, and can assure you that you have been of the greatest assistance and help to me, for which I thank you very much. . . . I am sorry you have not so far figured amongst the D.S.O. or mention in despatches, but I may as well tell you now, I recommended you twice, besides the mine episode. . . . Anyway you have the satisfaction of knowing that your Captain was more than satisfied with your work. We all hope you will soon be out of pain and able to enjoy a very well-earned rest at your own home, and may we wish you a *speedy* return to No. 3 Coy., though I am not sure if this last wish is a kind one—perhaps after 2 or 3 months in England you will be able to come back feeling as fresh as new paint and fully equipped for the winter campaign.

Again many thanks, Widders, for all that you have done for me, and with best wishes for a nice rest and holiday,

Yours ever.

As George would never say much about the deeds which earned him the Cross, his mother asked one of

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his fellow-officers to give her an account of the mining incident, and his Captain[1] kindly wrote:

April 23rd, 1916.

I think we may say he was given the medal primarily for general and consistent good work under very trying conditions. As you know, he was very prominent in rescuing the miners from the mine at Givenchy, going down himself and along the shaft at the bottom, and helping to carry the men who were gassed. He was full of resource in any emergency of the kind. By the way, it is almost a year ago to-day, viz., the 25th of April, on which this happened.

Again in May, during the Festubert attack, the Canadians were due to launch an attack on our right: running from our trench was an old German communication trench, down which we had a post, about 150 to 250 yards forward of our line. When the Canadians attacked, their left platoon lost its way owing to their officer being shot; they were on the point of opening fire on George and his post, when he ran out of the trench towards them, collected them together, and would have led them to the attack himself had I not prevented him: these Canadians were then too far detached from their

[1] Major George Edmund Vaughan, M.C., Coldstream Guards, fell on September 15, aged 35. He was educated at Beaumont College, the Oratory School, and Sandhurst. Entering the Coldstream Guards in 1901, he went to South Africa in January, 1902, and was there until the end of the war. He afterwards became adjutant of his battalion. In 1913 he accompanied Lord Willingdon, Governor of Bombay, to India as his A.D.C. Returning to England in June, 1914, he went to the front with the Coldstream Guards on the outbreak of war as a captain. He was wounded at the Battle of the Aisne, but returned to the front again in October, and remained with his battalion until September, 1915, when he was invalided home with enteric. He was awarded the Military Cross in July, 1915. Last January he was promoted major, and he returned to the front in April.

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own Battalion, and so I sent them back through our trench to rejoin their own unit.

As I think I told you before, there was nothing he loved better than putting up barbed wire in front of our trenches or crawling out to listen for the Germans: he was always ready for anything.

I must not forget too his great ability in dressing the wounded: he was particularly useful in that respect in Rentoul Woods, near Ypres, in 1914, and I many times had to congratulate him on the way he bound up the men's wounds.

I don't know that I can add anything further: you already know how highly I esteemed George: he was invaluable to me during the year he was in my Company, and I fully appreciated his hard work.

It was characteristic of George that when wounded he managed to be taken to his friend Derek Gunston's house, which his mother had kindly put at the disposal of the King Edward's Hospital next door. On the way there, as he was the last patient to be put down, he had even persuaded the driver to let him stop for a minute to see his Uncle in North Street!

At Grosvenor Gardens he was received with the same kindness as of old, and many friends came there to congratulate him, but his nerves had been very much overwrought, and his mother was glad to get him home into the quiet country.

There he saw his own doctor, whom he had known from boyhood, and he found that George had been suffering for some time from a trouble which necessitated a surgical operation. He was well cared for in the private room of the local hospital, where the Matron was the nurse who had been with his father in his last

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illness. She had always been devoted to George, of whom she had seen a good deal, having also nursed his mother through several severe illnesses. It will therefore be seen how, during this trying time, he was surrounded by those who loved him, and this was a great consolation afterwards.

His bright spirits failed him sadly, however, and he sometimes said that it did not seem worth while to endeavour to recover to go back to another winter in the trenches.

This was only for a short time. Kind friends came to cheer him up, amongst them Lady Blanche Hozier and her daughter; his Uncle, Theodore Chambers, and his family were close by for the holidays; Eustace Strong, too, was at Hammerwood, and the Winnington-Ingrams were at Tunbridge Wells, so there was quite a family gathering.

Thornhill, the dower house on the estate, had been turned into a home for disabled soldiers, and in spite of George's feeling that he did not like anything "connected with the war," he went to see the men, who declared him to be the "proper kind of officer."

One of his Aunts, Miss Constance Whidborne, was also helping there, and came down constantly to see her nephews. He also had the pleasure of seeing his brother Seymour, who came home on leave at the beginning of August, and of spending many happy days with his brother Charlie, who had been wounded a month after himself whilst making a reconnaissance in Flanders. He had had a marvellous escape, the aeroplane having been riddled with bullets, one passing through the petrol tank before entering Charlie's leg.[1]

[1] Again wounded in Mesopotamia (March 5, 1917) where he had rejoined his regiment, the 14th Hussars, in November, 1916.

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Although neither of their wounds was serious, they were both obliged to have three months' leave, and in spite of the war, Hammerwood became once more quite its cheerful self. It is essentially a suitable place for large gatherings, and wherever George was people were always merry. He had moments of extreme depression, but *then* he generally liked to be alone.

It may be well to say here that when in his convalescence he was thoroughly wearied of modern novels; he read his Thackeray with pleasure, the quiet early-Victorian calmness of diction conducing to bring his mind back to a more natural and tranquil state.

With regard to his reading in the trenches, besides the ordinary novels, he had two or three volumes of poetry, which he kept carefully. His Rudyard Kipling was well worn. He also carried about with him a small book of Psalms and "The Happy Warrior," and after the first battle of Ypres, where he lost his "Daily Light," in which were the photographs of his father and mother, he took back a little copy of the Burial Service, as he said not only would it be useful, but it contained "everything one wanted." This is interesting to note, in view of the attack which some members of the Church of England have made upon it.

During his leave he paid a happy little visit to Charanté, where some of his sisters were staying with their Aunts. His cousin, James Elverson's wife, and her little son, "Tony," were there too, and long mornings on the sunny beach helped to restore his health.

He wrote from Scotland:

My dear Aunts,

I enjoyed last week awfully. It was very good. I am only just beginning to realise how kind it was of you to let me drive your car. I don't, as a

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matter of fact, think that I hurt it, and I certainly enjoyed it very much, also the bathing, which I think did me a lot of good.

This is a lovely place, and very good shooting, and the air is very bracing.

I shall enjoy having that picture very much, and will put it up directly I get home.

Well, I don't suppose I shall be going back to France for another month or so, and I shall probably see you all again.

With very many thanks for a ripping time.

This visit to the North helped to cheer him up, and he wrote:

Aberarder,
Strathnairn,
Inverness,
August 20th, 1915.

I am enjoying myself immensely, and feeling much better already.

I have shot by myself the last two mornings, and got seven snipe, one teal, one rabbit, three grouse and one mallard.

I am going out again this morning with a man who is staying here named Arthur Brand; he is a brother of the Admiral whom Glynde belongs to. He says he knows Dr. Wallis, and has often shot with him.

To-morrow we are going to "drive." "Mr. Beckie" said he expected to get 150 brace. I hope we shall. This is a lovely place. We fished in the afternoon. The first time we got four trout weighing three lbs. Yesterday afternoon was bad. . . ."

His kind friend, Mrs. Beckwith Smith, wrote afterwards of him:

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"He was so well and full of life in Scotland, and shot so well and was so interesting about the war, and so modest about the 'bit' he had done and his reward. We never could get him to speak about it. . . . His charm was great . . . all our servants are grieved for George."

He was indeed fond of these friends; he had had so many invitations that he did not know what to do; he would have liked to have accepted them all, but he did not wish to be away from home for long. In one of his depressed moods at this time he said that he was always getting into trouble for not answering letters, but it was not entirely his fault. He was always inundated with invitations, being a cheerful companion. He loved the "poetry of motion" as exemplified in dancing. He loved country life, though the social part of London life appealed to him. It was therefore not unnatural that he should be in great request for house-parties, and he often found great difficulty in choosing which tempting invitation should be accepted. He was very careful to acknowledge the kindness of his host and hostess afterwards, though the multitude of his engagements often prevented his keeping up with his friends.

George returned to Windsor, and found the work quite hard enough for his strength. He came down for forty-eight hours' leave to Moorhill, West End, where his mother and sister, Theodora, were staying with his grandparents. He was so tired that he wanted to sleep most of the time, but on Sunday afternoon went to see some of their friends to whom they wished to show their brave soldier, and charmed everyone as usual with his courtly manners. It was a precious time to look back on afterwards; he was so gentle and affectionate.

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He felt the sadness of England very much. He was quite willing to die, and on this occasion he said to his mother that he did not feel he could bear the strain of another winter, that he did not mind dying as much as other men, as he had had such an "awfully good time," and had done most of the things he wanted to do; that as so many of his friends had already gone, he thought he would rather be with them than face life without them after the war. George had a true belief in "The Life Beyond," looking on the entrance into the Future as the "greatest adventure of all."

He could probably have represented his health to the Medical Board in such a way that they would have kept him in England, but he wished to relieve other officers, and he said that he did not care for military work in England unless peace were to come soon.

The Military Cross was given to him by the King on Thursday, October 15th, and he brought it down the same day to Hammerwood. As he got down from the car, he said: "There, Mother, I got that for you, and it was 'for good work done.'"

He had to announce at the same time that this was a good-bye visit. The afternoon he arrived there was a shooting party going on, but he came in early, not seeming to care for the sound of the guns.

At the beginning of the Great War it was said that no army could fight in trench warfare day after day for more than three weeks without being exhausted. During the Marlborough Wars,[1] when news of what Italy or Spain was doing took weeks to reach Flanders, there was always a winter truce, and men had time to rest until the next campaign. Our men have had no

[1] See Bishop Hare's Letters when chaplain to the Duke of Marlborough, in *Report*, Part ix., Historical MSS. Commission.

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respite day or night. The bombardment goes on continually, and the sound of the guns reminds dwellers in quiet places in Kent and Sussex of the unceasing valour of our men.

Some of the heaviest losses during the first year fell upon the Guards. The three Battalions of the Coldstream lost as many as any. At one time the 1st Battalion was reduced to about 80 men. George was so proud of these men that when, in the *Times* of October 14th, just before he went out, there appeared an article headed "The Grandest Scene," "A Charge by the Guards," he carried the cutting about with him, reading with great unction to those who had not seen it the following paragraph, ending up with, "It was our men who were 'those grand fellows.'"

An Advance in the Open.

The following day we sat and literally dodged shells and bullets. Then the grandest scene that I have ever seen in my life occurred—the Guards advancing in artillery formation over about three-quarters of a mile completely in the open, in broad daylight. At last the Germans got news of it, and the shells they sent over came in a stream. The whistles and explosions were incessant, and the air must have been black with flying shells if they had been visible through the thick smoke. Only half a dozen were touched. How we cheered them when they slowly and in perfect order crossed over us and passed on! They were the grand fellows who were in reserve to us in Givenchy, and now we were in reserve to them. Can you imagine the ordinary battle pictures of troops advancing under hell's own shell fire? I thought such a thing was impossible. Now I not only know it is true, but I saw it all.

In the *Daily Mail* of June the 27th, 1916, we find the following paragraph, in which we see the same tale of the heroism of these men:

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A few splendid remnants of the original British Expeditionary Force have arrived at the Tower of London. They are men of the 3rd Battalion Coldstream Guards. At the time of the outbreak of war the battalion held the highest shooting honours in the Brigade of Guards, and it had much to do with the "withering fire" which compelled the fear and admiration of the Hun. These men now at the Tower were among the first to arrive in France. They came through the retirement from Mons, fighting their brilliant rear-guard battles by day, and by night burying their fallen comrades. There are not many of the heroes left—just a few guarding the old Tower, their former home—just a few of Britain's bravest, who march of an evening "unhonoured and unnoticed" to do picket duty at the Bank of England.

. . . . . .

"'Missing' has been one of my terrors," wrote one of the Aunts, and this was the news which came about Ronald Elverson, the youngest of his family, after the fearful battle of Loos on September 26th.

This boy, who was just the same age as George, had gone through Cambridge with the intention of entering the army, like his father and brother, but a gentle and loving disposition inclined him to take up the more peaceful occupation of "school-mastering." He was loved and respected by the boys whom he had been teaching at Ellesmere College before the war, and being tall and athletic, he had great influence with them. Having been in the O.T.C., he obtained a commission quickly in the 9th East Surrey Regiment. He did not go out to France until August, 1915, and did not move up to the front until the day of the battle. The troops had marched fifty miles, and were quite exhausted when they made the attack. It was an awful experience for the young officers, and they felt as if they were suddenly precipitated into another world of horror.

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All the information that has been obtained of Ronald is that he had been seen helping three officers from different regiments who had been wounded, and that he had been twice seriously wounded himself.

One of the last letters George wrote was to his Aunt, Mrs. Elverson, saying that he would try to glean some news of his cousin.

Just after George had returned to the front another sorrow fell on the family. His cousin Robert, younger son of his uncle, Captain Roland Chambers, D.C.O., 3rd King's Liverpool Regiment, was killed. George had been much interested in this boy, who had gone out to a tea estate in Ceylon in February, 1914, and after doing well there, had written home in September, 1914, saying that 227 young men were volunteering from Ceylon, and that he must join too, for, said he, "I cannot stay here whilst others are fighting for their country."

He made his way to England without waiting for financial aid, shipped as a steerage passenger, and at once enlisted in the Royal Naval Volunteer Division. After training through the long dark winter, he was commissioned to the 3rd Batt. Hampshire Regiment, and went to the front, where he was attached to the 1st Batt. Gloucester Regiment in June, 1915. In August, 1915, he volunteered for the work of saphead-listening, and served with the Royal Engineers, until recalled to his regiment for the general advance in September.

He fought through the battle of Loos without receiving the slightest wound, but was wounded by an H.E. shell on October 13th, and died in the Clearing Station on October 15th without recovering consciousness. One of George's last letters home was to Robert's parents:

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"I have just heard the news of Robert, and have just time to write a short letter before we go into the trenches. I am awfully sorry for you and Aunt Ruby, but not for him, as I feel sure he feels like I do, that it is the best death you can possibly die.

"I am glad he was out some time before, as he probably either killed or was the means of killing more Huns than the average man does, which is the great thing.

"I want to hear particulars of his death, as I am sure it was a very fine one. If he was still mining, particularly. I think those who do the mining are the bravest people in the war—even above the airmen and submarines.

"Well, Uncle Roland, you know how I feel for you, for I know what poor Mother would feel if anything happened to one of us, but you must be awfully proud of Robert. I know I am."

. . . . . .

George left Hammerwood on October 15th. It was a sad parting, and he seemed to have a presentiment that it was the last good-bye. He wrote cheerfully, however:

The Train,
Oct. 17th, 1915.

I am in the train, and have just passed Tonbridge and you.

I did not go yesterday after all, and was kept hanging about at the end of a telephone all day.

Here I am on my way back again, after having enjoyed a very lucky three months at home. . . .

I do hope I go back to the 3rd Batt. . . .

Well, I feel very well and quite fit after my operation.

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3rd Coldstream Guards,
British Expeditionary Force,
Sat.—Oct. 23.

MY DARLING MOTHER,

We go back into the front trenches this evening. Last night we had a decent sleep in a ruined cottage behind, and a wash. I am feeling *very* well and quite happy. . . . Thank goodness, I am back in my own Company. Yesterday was the anniversary of the battle of St. Julien. The Company were all very reminiscent of it, also No. 4 Company, whom I saw. We are beginning next week the anniversary of the first battle of Ypres and Rentoul Woods. I wish I could have an anniversary of my November leave.

I hope you are all thriving. Please thank Rita very much for her photos.

Love to all.

GEORGE.

On the occasion of George's going out this time Mrs. Elverson had written to his mother, "Your children seem to bear charmed lives," and many others had thought that they were being "kept" in the most marvellous way. It was therefore all the greater shock when the fatal telegram came on October 26th from the War Office: "Deeply regret to inform you that Lieut. G. F. Whidborne, Coldstream Guards, died of wounds 24th October. Lord Kitchener expresses his sympathy."

When George had been invested with his Cross at Buckingham Palace he was the only officer of the Guard present, and the King had talked to him about the war for several minutes. No mention of the general sympathy that was felt on the occasion of this great family

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loss would be complete without a reference to the real interest which our King and Queen have taken in all the casualties of the war, for in the case of each fallen officer it has been their practice to send to the bereaved parents or widow a telegram expressing their personal regret at the sad news. In this case the royal message was not received till November 2nd, being delayed by the King's accident in France. Their interest is no mere form.

Over three hundred letters of sympathy in her great loss were received by Mrs. Whidborne, and it is felt that, without quoting from some of these, the story of George's life would be incomplete.

They were most of them full of real sorrow and appreciation. Those who had known him as baby, boy and man deeply mourned him, and his fellow-officers' testimony to their affection for him and opinion of his military qualities are worth recording. As, however, people do not like to see their innermost feelings put in print, and as most of the letters were evidently "from the heart," it has been thought better to omit the names in nearly every case.

Extracts from letter from Colonel J. A. G. Drummond-Hay to Mrs. Whidborne (by kind permission):

Regimental Headquarters,
Coldstream Guards,
Buckingham Gate.

I feel I cannot but write you a few lines to tell you how deeply I and the whole regiment share with you in the sorrow which has fallen on your shoulders, and how sincerely we sympathise with you in your grief. . . .

Such a splendid officer he was, in spite of the short time he had been in the regiment. His having won

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the Military Cross is ample proof of that, without anything else, but the way his brother-officers speak of him and the expressions of sorrow at the regiment losing such a good officer, which I hear spoken on every side by those who had served with him, are something quite exceptional. . . . His keenness to be up and doing, and to get back to help the regiment at the front, will always be the recollection of him that will live in my memory. . . .

I am so glad that he had the satisfaction of receiving his Military Cross at the hands of the King the last time he was over here. It is something to be thankful for that he was not called upon to lay down his life before he had heard his Sovereign's commendation of his gallantry which won that decoration so exceptionally early in his career. . . .

One felt he was one of those gallant few who would go anywhere, do anything, brave any danger, with no thought beyond how it could best be done, so as to give the most useful results. . . .

As an officer, he was one in a thousand, and by his death we have been robbed of one who could be confidently counted upon always to add yet more lustre to the glorious records of gallantry, which every battalion of the regiment has earned by its behaviour from the first days of the war up till this last. . . .

From his Superior Officer during the last weeks at Windsor:

DEAR MRS. WHIDBORNE,

I hope you will forgive my writing to you at such a time, but I feel I must write and tell you how grieved I am for you in the loss of your son. He came to my Company at Windsor, and was such a great

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help to me in the training of the men, and during the short time he was with me I grew to have a great affection for him. He was always so quiet and kind and thoughtful for others. His place will be a most difficult one to fill. I had a short letter of farewell from him only a few days ago from Flanders, and I thought then, and I think still now, of that wonderful thoughtfulness for others which prompted him to write those words.

I hope you will allow me to offer my deepest sympathy. In him I feel I have lost a most excellent friend, although perhaps he might say he hardly knew me.

From his Colonel at the Front:

DEAR MRS. WHIDBORNE,

May I ask you to forgive me for writing to you, but I feel that I would like to offer you my most heartfelt sympathy in your sad loss.

Your son was a brave man, and as such he met his death; and if it can comfort you to know it, I know he did not suffer at the last.

I know that no words of mine can help, but I felt that I must write to you. His loss to me is untold, for he did excellent work, and was always cheery in troublesome and difficult times.

From a friend in the Regiment:

DEAR MRS. WHIDBORNE,

I don't know how to write to you to offer you my heartfelt sympathy in your terrible sorrow.

George was one of my greatest friends, and it has been a terrible blow to me. He was one of the bravest and best officers that ever lived, and was loved by all

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the men. I had been so cheered up when he returned, as he was in my Company. The night he was wounded he was putting up wire very close to the German trenches, and was wounded by a bomb. I and one of my men brought him in, and I thought at the time he was not very bad. As usual he was doing a very brave act.

I am afraid no words of mine can be of any comfort to you, but, believe me, I offer you from my heart and from the men of my company our warmest sympathy.

From the same:

DEAR MRS. WHIDBORNE,

I saw your youngest son last Sunday and told him all I knew, and so did not write to you again, as I thought you would have heard all from him.

George's servant was with him all the time, and tells me that he hardly suffered at all. All that night he was unconscious, but the next morning he was conscious, knew his servant and talked to him a little, and then fell asleep. His servant then went and lay down, as he had been up all night. He was woken up after lunch and told that George was in a motor ambulance going to be taken to a hospital further back. His servant was with him, and poor little George passed away in the ambulance. He was taken to the 6th Field Ambulance at Bethune, and was buried there. I went and had a lot of flowers put on his grave. All his personal things will have been sent home to you from there. I am afraid his field glasses were lost, as they were on him when he was wounded, and we took his wet equipment, with his glasses on them, off before bringing him in.

I can't tell you how much I appreciated your kind letter to me. It was hard enough to live this life before,

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but now I feel absolutely broken down, so I am sure you will understand how much I feel for you. I know nothing I can say will be any help to you, but this awful war looks like lasting for years, and if one has got to be taken, I would rather be taken now than later on, and so miss the horrors of a winter campaign.

There is one thing I forgot to tell you. A sergeant was wounded at the same time as George, and the next morning when George was conscious his first thought and his first word was to enquire if the sergeant had been brought in, and if he was all right. That was so characteristic of him, to think of other people first. I hope to get leave during the next month or so, and if you would like to see me, I should be only too glad to come down to see you. Please let me know if there is anything more I can tell you. Everybody in the Battalion feels the loss of George terribly.

DEAR MRS. WHIDBORNE,

As medical officer of the 3rd Battalion Coldstream Guards, I feel sure that you would like to hear some details about your son. At the time he was wounded he had charge of a party of men putting up wire in front of our trenches. The Germans commenced bombing, and one burst close to your son. He was wounded in several places in the right leg, and a small wound in the back. I reached him almost as soon as he was brought back into our trench. I dressed him and gave him some morphia, and sent him to hospital at once.

I am sure it will afford you some degree of comfort to know that he hardly suffered any pain at all. The doctor who attended him at the hospital told me that the morning after he was admitted the condition of your

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son was most satisfactory—no pain, no suffering of any kind, but during the afternoon he took a turn for the worse and passed quite peacefully away. I was indeed grieved to hear of his death, as he was one of our bravest and best officers. . . .

I offer you my deepest sympathy in your great loss.

From a fellow-traveller in S. Africa:

Coed Cefu, Tregar.

DEAR MRS. WHIDBORNE,

I have not the pleasure of knowing you, but I feel I must write and say how sincerely sorry I am for the news in to-day's "Morning Post." I met your son in Bulawayo when we were both on a trip in 1911. He was then at Trinity, and later in the summer I invited him to Marlow, but he was unable to come on account of your ill-health at the time. He afterwards invited me to Cambridge, but I was unable to go. I wanted to write to him in June, when I saw he was wounded, but unfortunately had not his address.

We had a great time in Bulawayo. When I say we, there were three of us: your son, Captain Palmer, D.S.O., Welsh Guards, killed this month, and myself. It will always be a matter of regret to me that I did not see your son again, as he was a sportsman and a gentleman, and one of the best of fellows.

The keynote of the letters was "every one loved him," and "he was one of the most charming people I have ever met."

George never repeated evil of anyone. The gift of charm had been given to him, and he generally managed to say tactful things which put people at their ease. He

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was always ready to do a kindness, but above all, his cheerful ways were what the world appreciated most, for a smile is worth much in this "vale of tears."

Had the great opportunity for service never come to George Whidborne, yet his friends would have mourned for him, and would have missed that courteous, happy manner, which even casual acquaintances wrote about as "wholly delightful."

Many of his friends felt that life could not be the same again to them without him, for, as one of them wrote, "The beauty and simplicity of his character, his love of the world without worldliness, his intense chivalry and high idealism seemed so wonderfully crowned by the awful privilege of pain and the glory of his death."

The people on the estate felt that they had lost a friend, as the following extracts from their letters will show:

"His death is a loss to all who had the privilege of knowing him, and I know I can ask you to accept the genuine sympathy of all on the Hammerwood Estate, tenants and workpeople alike, among whom the feeling towards your son George has always been one of affection as well as of respect."

"For a full week I have been trying to write a few words, and the task is still too much for me—it is all too terrible, too unbelievable."

"Mr. George endeared himself to us all by his kind smile and kindly manner to us at all times. We shall all miss him very much. He will always live in our memory as a good kind Friend which we cannot replace."

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The school children wrote:

"It has fallen to me on behalf of the school children (*your* school children, as you seemed pleased to call us the other day) to write you a letter of condolence in your sad loss. We are in very deep sympathy with you. Most people about here knew Mr. George, and felt that he would do good work in the world, and he might have done some great and brave deed which would have made his name known to people for years to come.

"Mr. George has done his duty, but we do wish he had done his duty and come back to Hammerwood as well."

Indeed nearly everyone on the place sorrowed as at a personal loss.

"A courteous, manly, English gentleman of the highest and best type" was the verdict of one of the tradesmen of the nearest town who had watched him grow to manhood.

Among the many appreciative letters it is difficult to make a selection, but the warm sympathy shown was such that they were a real help to the family.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS FROM FRIENDS

"I never knew till now how far George had wound himself round my heart. It is no good offering you vain words of sympathy; if I feel as I do, what must your feelings be?"

"We knew him so little, and yet we loved him for his wonderful charm, and my remembrance of him this summer is so vivid. His death seems the most terrible

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tragedy, and I can't express to you all the sympathy I feel for you."

"My husband and I were with him at Arolla climbing two years ago, and saw him again last year at Lausanne. He was one of the most delightful people to meet on a holiday."

"What can I say? You have lost your splendid precious boy—it is all the brave—the good—the fair who are taken from us, and what a hero's death he has had—and how proud you must be of him, and he will have his Father to meet him there. I had not seen much of him lately, but I always look back to the first time I saw him, when he was about fourteen—such a splendid, straight, manly boy!"

"My heart aches for you—this gifted, charming son, beloved by all. . . . It is too sad to realize he has been taken. . . . I remember him as such a beautiful baby, and then as such a fascinating young man."

"It seemed as if George had everything that could make life happy, and his bright, merry disposition as well to add to it, and that makes one admire even more the way he went off to his soldier life. . . . The only words I can think of are the three of the Bishop of Winchester's text at the great Intercession Service in the Cathedral—'Into Thy hands.'"

"It is heart-breaking to think that the eldest is gone out of the happy home circle, but they are all such dear children; their one and only thought will be to make up to you all they can for the great void. You must be proud to think you have brought up your boys so

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that no one can choose amongst them for goodness and pureness of living, and now the one taken leaves the brightest memory for the rest to look up to. I thought George charming, and the very picture of a delightful English boy, and his death is a personal grief to me. The perfectness of your practised faith make the hope of reunion for you a certainty and a comfort."

"I shall always remember your boy. I liked him specially—so gentle, so brave, so devoted to you and to his home, so full of the sense of duty. . . . I know that you have a firm hold on the great things that can alone help in such a desolating sorrow. . . . Do you remember old Carlyle's words, 'Thou canst do without Happiness and instead thereof find Blessedness.' Nothing can rob you of the blessing of having had such a son, and of having given him to such a cause."

"He was so splendid always, and so brave, and one cannot realise life without him. . ? . I find it impossible to express our grief and sympathy."

"He was so full of life and hope and all that was best; we really loved him, as you know; and when it seems so hard for us, what must it be for you? We are truly suffering for the loss of one of our bravest and dearest friends."

"It seems only a little time since I remember you as such a radiantly happy young mother, and I know how devoted you have been to your children and they to you.

"I hope you can still think with happiness of those days, for one never really loses what one has once had, though it seems to be hidden from one for a time."

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"I saw your boy so recently . . . so cheerful and brave."

"Your son has given his life for us all, and we all owe him undying gratitude—more, he has given his life for truth and honour and liberty, for all that makes it worth while to be alive, and the whole world is indebted through him to you. I know you must exult to feel all this, even while you weep, but oh! the pain of it all. God alone can help you, and He will help you.

"He has given so much for his country, first his wound, and now this. . . . 'The things—the loved ones—that are not seen are eternal,' and are more truly living than they have ever been on earth. . . ."

"In the accumulated sorrow and bereavement that has touched almost every home among our circle of friends, and a whole world beside, there is the one bright light that those who are gone have given living proof of the strength of the Spirit; they have followed the line of duty without thought of themselves; they have been led by the Highest Inspiration to fight for the right, so that through all this horror and bloodshed the fruits of the Spirit shall in the end remain in victorious possession of this troubled world. Your children have been taught by example and precept and inheritance to put their faith in God, and that is an incalculable comfort to those who are left, but when all sources of comfort and uplifting thoughts that can help are kept steadily in view, beneath is the aching sense of loss, and we feel deeply with you, for the loss of a child takes something of oneself, and all that they have been and might have been seems blended in one sad loving memory of them."

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From a cousin, the Bishop of British Guiana:

". . . It is you, the Mothers of England, who are giving of your best, that are saving our country and Empire. Giving is the only riches, and the one plan of salvation shewn to the world is permeated by sacrifice. Our colonies are stirred by the example of England as they have never been stirred before, and our boys (even white boys), who are not strong in speaking the truth or keeping their promises or doing brave things, see how England went into the war with her eyes open to keep her pledge to Belgium, incurring certain loss. It is very grand, and death brought home to you means life to us, I hope, abroad—life in a new spirit of duty and honour and unselfishness. 'Except a grain of wheat,' you know the rest."

The Bishop of Chichester, too (in whose Diocese Hammerwood Church is), writing of the sacrifice of George's life, said:

"We know how dear this is to the Master who accepted the broken box of ointment; sweeter to Him must be the sweet odour of an unselfish life and death."

From his Aunts:

"We all feel as if the world had stopped—so many of our hopes and plans centred round dear George, and he grew dearer every day. When his letter came about Ron, I thought what an ideal head of the family he would make as he grew older. That ready helpfulness in trouble was so exactly Ferris over again. No, this world certainly won't be the same place again for any of us—but, for that matter, Heaven is a different place, too, isn't it? Where George is, with all his brilliant and gay spirits, can't be the conventional place we tried

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to look forward to when we were young. 'The Father's House' is the only thing that in the least makes it real to me, and if I do imagine a kind of celestial Hammerwood, with our Father and Mother and Ferris and Hamish all welcoming the boys home for the everlasting holidays—well, I can't stretch up to anything better!"

"I am so thankful that God allowed him to be slightly wounded before, so as to enable him to spend the last few months at home, which must have been a great happiness to him, for he certainly loved you dearly, far more than most boys do their parents. It makes the loss greater, but there is much comfort in it."

"I just cannot tell you how I loved dear George—he was almost as a son to us in our love—very, very dear to us."

"Don't you think the thought of George is one of the proofs of Eternal Life? He seemed to get more and more perfect . . . and to feel that he who was all this has come to an end—is against all one's experience of common sense in Nature, and if true, would make one go out of one's mind."

"R. and I loved George dearly. . . . I don't think anything can be the same again without him, everything here seems to need him so, and as the days pass the longing for him seems to grow worse. . . . R. is quite inconsolable; he thought the world of George, and we were so immensely proud of him. We always pray now that God will help us to bring up our boys to be like him."

"I had so hoped, and almost expected, that George would be spared. . . . It will be such a grief, I know, to many. . . . You will have much to console you as

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time goes on in the fact of his having been a hero and having made a name for himself before his death, and I know that, like myself, you would rather he was spared suffering, as it would have been if he had come home maimed for life. I can't help thinking of the joy it was when dear Ferris's telegram came at Feltwell, and how proud we all were of the first boy, and how pleased Ferris will be to see him again. What re-unions there must be up there just now."

From three soldier cousins:

"I feel as if I had lost a brother, which he was to me. I am now working hard to get my commission as soon as possible, and go out to do my share, as George did his."

"George was a *very* gallant fellow."

"You know how fond I was of George, although he was much younger than I am, and though we had not seen much of each other lately. I always looked on him as a good follower of his Father; he was so extraordinarily unselfish and thoughtful for others. In the course of meeting a good many men as I have done in my profession, one occasionally comes across one here and there who is universally liked and respected, and who is bound, without knowing it, to bring out all that is best in other people. I mean what I call the 'perfect gentleman,' and George was one of these."

From his Grandmother:

"Our beloved George—I feel he was one of those who would find life and its waves hard to buffet with, and he has gone to his father and to his grandparents. How they will appreciate him. I loved him best of all

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my grandsons—the first one—and yet I feel perhaps the most reconciled to losing him, as being too fragile and highly-strung for this evil world. I think you almost had a presentiment. . . . Father adored George, and said directly, 'Not George,' when I first told him it was bad news. . . ."

From his Uncles:

"It is very wonderful how closely you and he have been bound up with my past life; those times at Harrow brought us very near together, then South Africa, and lately he has meant so much, hasn't he?

"From what you say, your parting was perfect, and God has just taken him in His own good time. One did think he was going to be spared, but then one thought the war would be over soon—he could not have stood it much longer. . . . He will be happier; life would always have been difficult and hard for him. . . . It is more than half my life gone, and for you I know what you say, that your life was wrapt up in his character and success. . . .

"It has changed all the world for me—for you, darling, it will be just a still greater longing for the life to come, and it will help all who knew him to bear further witness for Christ. What a beloved affectionate boy he was. I agree with you that it is better than that he should have been badly maimed. You are called upon to make the great sacrifice, and you have done it, I know, at great cost. You give him willingly—the greatest gift you had to give. . . ."

"How one has allowed hope to buoy one up. I wish I was nearer to you. . . . I find everywhere signs of seriousness and a sort of acquiescence in the whole

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terrible thing as part of the will of God. . . . I know you will be comforted by the glorious nature of the end. There could be no finer; and I am sure, with his temperament, he is relieved of much trouble. . . . He was ready to give his life here, and it was a voluntary sacrifice for his country. I hope it will spur us all on to greater determination and effort. I feel inclined to go on speaking, speaking, speaking to the workers, urging them to greater effort. On the whole they are working well and meaning well, but so much more is wanted to be done. . . . I am sure what I am doing is really good work and greatly needed. . . ."

Memorial Services were held both in Hammerwood Church and Holy Trinity, Brompton, where Eustace Strong was curate, and where George went sometimes when in London. Both services were much liked by his friends. One wrote:

"I am writing now to tell you how beautiful I thought the service, and how glad I am to have been privileged to take part in it. One felt so certain that George and his friends who have passed over were very near, and that they must have been so glad that our thoughts and prayers were so much in accord with what they know now to be true. The music and prayers were both so beautiful, and the sounding of the 'Last Post' brought home more than anything the glorious manner of the 'Passing.' I think it must be a great comfort to you now to remember how bright and cheery George always was, and to know how many lives he must have brightened by his presence. Our boys are all so fond of him, and, as you know, he stayed with us several times for dances, and was always the life and soul of the party."

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An older friend wrote:

"I think the Memorial Service you had for him breathed something of the spirit that was in him, raising the thoughts high above suffering and death, and carrying them up to the 'Crown of Life.' I was never at a more beautiful service; it was so spiritual."

"I somehow can only think of the dear fellow as the little lad in those grey flannels—and it is almost difficult to picture him as a man and a brave soldier.

"One could well believe that officers and men would love him, his brightness and his fair, beautiful face—and all combined with real capability and unselfish bravery. You all must feel so proud—so thankful. So thankful too that he was spared long suffering, and that his last hours were spent with loving friends caring for him. I was so glad I could go to the Service. It was a very beautiful and comforting one, and I felt the better and the happier for being present."

Letter from Miss Ada Whidborne some time later:

"We had a drawing-room meeting for the Army Scripture Readers yesterday, and the Secretary brought down with him the reader to the Guards Brigade, an old Coldstream Guardsman. . . . He knew George both at Windsor and afterwards for a short time after he went out. He spoke of him with great respect and admiration, and said there were many who, if they lived, would have cause to remember him with thankfulness always.

"He said several times 'I don't speak of him like this because you are relations.' He also said, 'The men who are alive now will never forget him, and those who are dead will say he helped them to get to God.'"

. . . . . .

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Before compulsory service came in, a recruiting sergeant was travelling up to the North, and entered a railway carriage with some socialistic workmen. He asked them why they did not enlist, and they gave the usual parrot-like reply that they would go when the gentlemen had gone. "Where are the rich men's sons?" they said. The soldier answered, "I will tell you. The rich men's sons are mostly under the sod in France." Even socialist and labour leaders have had to bear testimony to the gallantry shown by the British upper classes at the beginning of the war. Men fresh from the public schools did their duty splendidly both as officers and privates. The men who had danced in London ball-rooms, who had shot and hunted and fished, were highly educated and often rich;[1] the willingness of these men to die for their honour and their country is a good answer to those who object to "Sport." True, it is often overdone, but English outdoor life has certainly made fine soldiers.

People often object to the public school system, and it has had, in the opinion of many parents, grave defects in the past, but the "Tommy" knows in a minute when he has an officer from one of the good public schools over him, and he shows a respect for him which he pays to no one else.

The perfect gentleman, the ideal man of Psalm 15, "The citizen of Zion," as he is called in the heading to the Psalm, is surely the description of many of the officers who have fallen in this great strife, and down below the surface in most of their hearts is the "one thing needful" to complete the man "after God's own heart," trust in a Power beyond themselves.

[1] The property of one colonel was valued for probate at £400,000, whilst a yeomanry captain left £300,000 and a young subaltern £100,000.

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Many of the bravest and fairest of the sons of our old English families have laid down their lives in this war, not for honour or glory for themselves, but because they realised that high principles were at stake, and that as "the blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church," so their blood would be the seed of the spiritual life of generations to come: so also there *is* comfort for those who are mourning these loved ones lost upon the battlefield—the comfort that in some mysterious way their heroes have helped in the "Great Scheme" of our Maker for the regeneration of the world—and perhaps are still helping—for in Heaven is there not "the Warrior on the White Horse whose name is Faithful and True, and in righteousness doth He make war and the armies of heaven follow Him?"

"In that fine hour, for that proud cause, how fair a thing it was to die:
Without a murmur of regret: torn by sharp pain, without a sigh!
To die with wounds, to die with pain, there in the thunders and the strife,
To die for England on the field of England's greatest fight for life.
Dishonour tarnished not his flag: no stain upon his battles lay—
Forth from the conflict unashamed, he passed victorious on his way.
Forth from the conflict unashamed, with thanks to God, without a sigh.
So died for England's sake this man, and whispered it was sweet to die."[1]

[1] (From *The Happy Warrior*, by Harold Begbie.) Carried by George amongst his papers.

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SUPPLEMENT

I. POETRY

GEORGE had inherited in no small degree the love of literature and art, and had distinct talent for both, but he had little ambition, and his poem "The Lost Talent" might have been written about himself. His dissatisfaction with his own work prevented his embarking on larger enterprises, and, with the exception of "Samoa," he seems only to have written a few verses at a time, and it has been difficult to collect them together, as he very seldom told anyone that he had written them. His memory for poetry was always remarkable, enabling him to quote aptly and to give chapter and verse for any quotation he heard.

He painted most beautifully, but most of his pictures were done when still in his teens.

His father had been so much interested in both his artistic pursuits that it was not for some time after his death that his son could bear to go on with them owing to their association with the past.

THE LOST TALENT

THOUGH the eye could see colour unstained
And the finger transmit it untainted,
Though the hand and its mover were trained,
Where's the picture that never was painted?

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Though the soul could read Nature aright
And the language so free and unstinted
Could translate into song her delight,
Where's the poem that never was printed?

Though the talent was there to command,
Mighty genius so deep and unmeted,
Were they given a chance to expand?
Where's the life that was never completed?

G. F. W.

The Cambridge Review, February 3, 1910.

SAMOA

Carpe Noctem

THE fog rose slowly from the river bank,
Spreading its tentacles around me, dank,
Choking and all-embracing, like some great
Many-armed sea-monster, who is keen to sate
Its craving belly with a live man's blood.
The grey clouds gathering, emptied all their flood
Of snow and sleet and hail in one great fall,
Mixed with black soot, which poured in clouds from tall
Dark chimneys; so that all was grey and drear,
Begrimed with smoke and gloomier year by year.
Such was the prospect out of doors; within
The wind shook bolts and set up fearful din,
Groaned in the passage, howled and sighed and tore
At all the rattling windows, cursed and swore.
Close to the fire I drew my easy seat
And shut my eyes. Affected by the heat
I fell asleep. At first my troubled dreams
Were of the cold drear North, where frozen streams

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Move to the frozen shore; where frozen isles
Float in half-frozen seas for frozen miles.
But, as the summer sun affects the floe,
So the warm fire my dreams, with cheery glow.
Then all that I had thought or read or heard
Of the warm islands of the South appeared.
I stood on silver sand, washed by a bay
Unsoiled, untrodden, while a fresh salt spray,
Borne on the sea-wind's wings cooled my hot head.
Blue water lay transparent on a bed
Grown o'er with plants of every shape and hue,
Red as fresh blood and green and brown and blue,
While through them darted fishes, large and small,
Parting with glittering bodies seaweeds tall.
So lay the bay at rest; the fish and weeds
Never disturbed by Neptune's white-maned steeds
Who chafed and fretted at a barrier reef
Of coral, built with trouble, past belief,
By myriad busy workers of the deep
Who gave their very toil-spent lives to keep
The tender island from the savage waves,
Which daily threaten, from the sea that craves
To sweep that island from the ocean's breast,
Or float above it with a foaming crest.
Down to the sands luxurious foliage creeps,
Green grass and trailing vines, while distant peeps
Of purple upland through the palms are gained,
And here and there the rich black soil is stained
With sheets of gaily-painted flowers. While high
Above the sweeps of tropic woods (which lie
About its base, as creeps the circling moss
Far up an old tree's bole) crowned with a cross
A great blue mountain proudly lifts its crest
Into the clouds. And there in endless rest

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And undisturbed peace lies what is left
Of a frail body, of its soul bereft;
A body, racked with pain and with disease,
A soul but strengthened by infirmities.
But though the man be gone, the spirit still
Of the Enchanter rests by wood and hill
About the island, that he loved in words
Of deepest beauty that our tongue affords.
And there I stood uncertain for a space
And watched the white sea-horses run their race,
Far out at sea, until they reached the reef
And vanished into spray with sounds of grief.
And as transported by the scene I stayed
With eyes fixed on the breakers, lo! a maid
Appeared beside me. Like the swallow's back
Her streaming tresses glinted blue and black;
Gardenias crowned her head with petals clear,
While one pure blossom rested on her ear,
And stood out pale against her dusky skin.
And from her eyes I caught a glance akin
Unto the startled deer's, who longs to look,
But is half-afraid to see. She took
A step towards me which made shake the leaves,
Which round her waist a girdle formed like Eve's
In Eden's garden, and the leaves were mixed
With flowers and bright-hued feathers interfixed,
Which trailed and rustled round her graceful form
More like the creepers which festoon and worm
About the tropic trees, than like that plant
Which chokes the English oak and makes it pant
For breath, which every day the ivy makes
Much harder to inhale. Her eyes, deep lakes
Of shining glory, gazed with bolder air
As bright as stars that in the heaven stare;

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And as she looked I thought "'Tis perfect bliss
On such a day in such a place as this
To rest my eyes upon her queenly face
And on her sinuous form so full of grace;"
Then, while I mused in accents sweet and clear
She spake to me; though foreign to my ear,
I understood her words, and answered back.
She bade me follow her. Nor did I lack
The wish to acquiesce, but quickly left
The white-hot stretch of beach, and cleft
The undergrowth, that bordered on the shore.
I followed closely as she went before
And led me through a forest of tall trees,
Mahogany and bread fruit. Over these
Lianas climbed and dripped from leafy heights
Through which the sun's rays played their golden lights.
Our way soon brought us to a tiny burn
Which, pure as ether, trickled through the fern—
The emerald fern—upon a ruby bed.
The streamlet in a sportive fashion led
Into an open space, and vanished there,
Deep, dark, beneath the soil 'twas banished where
The sun could never kiss it with his rays
Until it reached by subterraneous ways
Its goal, the sea. Full length upon the sward
We flung our wearied forms. I claimed reward
For all my pains. The history of the isle
I asked of her. She told in native style
The fabled story handed down in song;
And thus she spake, sitting the flowers among:
"There was a time, when this fair land was nought
But dust and rocks and pebbles, void, nor wrought
In any shape; but soon the low earth-rocks,
Groaning in travail, shook with rumbling shocks,

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Conceived and bore a son, the earth we view."
(Samoa was the only world they knew.)
"The High-Rocks were its sire. But in its time
The earth matured and daily longed to climb
The vast ascent of heaven to pursue
The virgin winds, which high above him blew,
Evading him until one morn by chance,
They flew too low. The earth rose up and caught
Them to himself and wedded them. They brought
Him forth, in season due, fine sons, the clouds
Which roll in solid banks, and daughters, crowds
Of fleecy cloudlets, tinged with pink at morn,
And to these cloudlets were the zephyrs born,
The quiet breeze, and dews of life, which fall
When evening o'er the land has thrown her pall.
From this same dew of life the seasons came
With noon-day's heat and sun-set's crimson flame,
With twilight's shade, and with the mid-day glare.
And then the wide and spread-out heavens bare
Tangaola, the very first of men,
Whose children over forest, pool and glen
Hold sway, and I in line direct can trace
Descent from him, the founder of our race."
And while she spake the summer sun declined.
Dark stood the palms against the glow defined—
The glow, which crimsoned all the great snow banks
Of rolling clouds, whose bases and whose flanks
Were cool and blue—with glacier-tinted shade—
While tiny cloudlets, by the sunset made
Into a flock of scarlet feathers, lay
Upon a sky of blue-washed, pearly grey.
The warm glow faded, shades of evening fell;
But through the clear night air, like Philomel,
Her accents sounded clear, now soft now shrill,

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Then as she ceased, a silence drear and still
Came o'er the isle—a silence of the grave.
The white-horned moon shone coldly forth and gave
Each gently lapping wave a sparkling crest ;
And all the woods, in robes of phosphorus drest,
Shone with a weird, wild light, while distant voice
Of falling waters sounded, that rejoice
By day and night to murmur forth their thanks
For untired energy. Behind the banks
Of clouds the moon retired. I heard the soak
Of steady falling rain, and then—awoke.[1]

THE DANCE OF THE VAIN DESIRES

In a whirl of mad unreason
  Dance those flickering, fading fires,
Out of time and out of season
  Is the Dance of Vain Desires.

Captives bound with floral fetters
  Bow before those phantom flames,
Pleasure's slaves and fortune's debtors
  Mingle in those ghastly games.

Captives court their tyrant master,
  Parchèd lip and joyless mirth,
While the music moving faster
  Bursts the flood-gates of the earth.

Oft a victim hates his flower chains,
  Stretches to the empty sky,
Begs cessation to his earth pains,
  Begs to burst the chains and die.

[1] Second for Prize Poem at Harrow.

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But the bonds are all-compelling.
To the ceaseless round again
Turns the victim tho' rebelling,
Treads the measures in disdain.

Round and round, with restless longing,
Following the vagrant fire,
Thick the captive host is thronging
Round about its funeral pyre.

Till the fires die down to ashes,
Till their hearts are turned to lead,
Till the funeral music crashes
Thro' the silence of the Dead.

Through the endless after ages
Still those tyrants ever near
Are paying out their cruel wages,
Heeding neither word nor tear.

Round the Wrecks of Vain Endeavours
Grinning skulls and whited bones
Tread they out those mirthless measures
To the music of their groans.

CASTLE OF CHILLON—1908

Last night I spent upon the bed of Doom,
The unhewn rock a sleepless pillow lent.
Around me wrapt in silent gloom
The fearsome dungeon bent.

For days the nameless terrors which surround
The torture room, have held me in their grip.
They've burnt my flesh until I've cried aloud
And bitten through my lip.

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And the noose is waiting from the beam,
  And through an open door I see the lake,
Whose green-blue waters, which now glint and gleam,
  My useless corpse will take.

They'll throw me from the open window here,
  I'll dash against those dark green rocks below,
From there I'll slip into the waters clear,
  Where thick the dank weeds grow.

I'll sink and sink until I reach the bed,
  And then I'll rest three hundred feet below;
I'll watch the fishes glitter overhead,
  The weeds sway to and fro.

FRAGMENT

Ah, we are listening for a sound
  We know shall ne'er be heard again;
Sweet voices in the halls resound,
Fair forms, fond faces gather round,
  But all in vain, in vain.

Their feet shall never waken more
  The echoes in these galleries wide,
Nor dare the snow or mountains' brow,
Nor skim the river's frozen flow,
  Nor wander down its side.

They, they are gone! Not for a while,
  As golden suns at night decline,
And e'en in death our grief beguile,
Foretelling with a rose-red smile
  How bright the morn will shine.

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No ; these dark towers are lone and lorn ;
  This very crowd is vacancy ;
And we must watch and wait and mourn
And half believe they will return,
  And dream their forms we see.

And fancy music in our ear,
  Such as their lips could only pour,
And think we feel their presence near,
And start to find they are not here ;
  And never shall be more!

CLASS HATRED

Since from out the sea there rose
Britain, in her weal and woes,
There have been and there shall be
(Till she sinks back to the sea)
Banded high and low degree,
To do her bidding readily.

Barons with red hands and spur
Fought and gave their lives for her.
Yeomen followed—noble men
From English field and wood and fen,
From Irish moor and Scottish glen.
It is now as it was then.

Artists drew the guiding plans,
Stones were laid by artisans,
Wealthy men defrayed the cost,
None of these took part the most ;
The Nation's work, the Nation's boast,
The Nation's woe if it were lost.

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Still the brotherhood shall grow,
Britain's shield against each foe.
Woe to him who tries to split
A Nation's strength, by long years knit.
Petty preachings from the pulpit
Disagree with English wit.

SUNSHINE AND WIND

When the far hills ever vary
Blue to green,
Purple sheen,
Crowned with white clouds, light and airy.

All the shadows as they pass
To and fro,
Bending low,
In the meadows moving grass.

Chase each other, vain endeavour,
Always laugh,
Try to quaff
Dancing water from the river.

Rippling water, brown and blue,
Broken mirror
'Tween mire or
Lily patches, clouds peep through.

Stately bracken bending low,
Leafy height,
Showing white
Where the wand'ring breezes go.

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See that bird, against the gale
Fall and swing,
Weary wing,
Dark on light against dark, pale.

Rushing song of wind and brook,
Swaying grass,
Leafy mass,
Movement e'en in sheltered nook.

Golden stains where'er the sun
Burst his way,
Silver grey,
Where the clouds' fast shadows run.

Hammerwood, January 1909.

FORECASTS

I DIPPED into the future, far as human eye can see,
I saw the people's demagogues as happy as could be,
They rushed about in motor cars and aeroplanes galore,
They bagged the people's gardens to steep in pheasants' gore.

With startled mind I hurried to enquire why this was so,
Where Burns had learned "March Forward," and Lloyd George his "Tally-ho!"
"Was this then their object in leading Demos by the nose,
And aren't they quite as vicious as the old-time 'aristos'?"

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Then up and spake an ancient man that lived in times
that were,
He said, "The Dukes killed pheasants—but the people
had their share,
But now these blooming Socialists draw their five thou'
per an.,
They've ground the upper classes—now they grind the
working man."

THE ROAD SONG OF THE BOUNDER-LOG

(With apologies to Rudyard Kipling)

HERE we march at a wonderful pace
All the way to the Market Place.
Don't you envy our marvellous wit?
Wouldn't you like to try it a bit?
Wouldn't you like to have the pluck
To call the "proggins" a quaint old buck?
(When he can't hear you.) Never mind;
Brother—thy gown is torn behind.

Here we walk in a scattered band,
Each with a squib in his clever hand;
Here comes a prog! Quick, throw them away,
We don't want to seem too *terribly* gay.
Don't you wish you were witty enough
To call a "bobby" a piece of fluff.
(He may think us babes altho' we're gowned.)
Brother—thy cap hangs down all round.

All the talk we ever have heard,
Tho' it seems to others a bit absurd,

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Daring and brave and spicy and clever,
Jabber it quickly and all together.
Excellent! Wonderful! Cut and run!
Now we really are having some fun.
We're sure we are men—just so;
We're not serious or dull or slow,
We're simply awful nuts, you know,
Follow us in the way we go.

Then join our shouting lines that wander thro' the street,
We're really quite immortal—and we're having *such* a treat.
By the rubbish in our wake and the noble noise we make
Be sure, be sure, we're going to do some splendid things!

(From the *Granta.*)

SONG OF LANDOWNER

(*According to L. G.*)

I SPOIL the fields of the crop which yields
Food to the working man,
Although he may grouse, I destroy his house
And his garden when I can.

I am the taker of every acre,
Each field and wood I bag.
To make room for the pheasant, I oust the peasant,
A garden for every stag.

One of my habit's to hamper the rabbits,
I'm a sportsman to the core.
I cherish a hare with loving care,
Then wallow in its gore.

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I scatter their blood in a blighting flood,
Which nothing can assuage,
If I miss my bird (I know it's absurd),
But I tear up the crops in my rage.

A FANTASY

I STRAYED into the country where the spiders go when dead,
The moonbeams filtered grey,
In grim and ghastly way,
Through the waving arcs of gossamer which wavered overhead.

The air was damp and clammy, while a mournful breeze mourned loud,
The ground was moist and sticky,
Like a half-licked sugar "bikky,"
And overhead great spiders swung suspended in a cloud.

A million spiders hovered,
Their bodies thin, meagre,
Their great eyes wild and eager,
With that startled, pained expression one assumes before a sneeze.

Each spider wore a haunted, persecuted, wan expression,
For the ghosts of myriad flies
Groaned and glowered in the skies,
With a rattling of fetters which must tend to deep depression.

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To the spiders that would hearken to my few consoling
words
(At quite a moderate price),
I gave comfort and advice,
Such as "Fly from every sort of fly as you once avoided
birds."

1909.

THE BURIAL OF A BOODLE[1]

Written for an Album

THERE'S a curious sound of guzzing,
It's a million boodles buzzing,
While all the air is lachrymose with lamentations rife.
Blood-curdling sighs are welling,
Like an infant school at spelling,
'Tis not the sound of gaiety, nor yet the sound of strife.

The moon is horned and jagged,
Its occupant looks ragged,
As though returned from supper at an early morning
hour.
The soft clouds boo and blubber,
While the dry leaves quake and shudder,
But the grass looks quite expectant, as it does before a
shower.

A dark and dim procession,
Like a lunatic's obsession,
Winds slowly into view, then out of it again,
Gesticulates and mutters,
Like a housemaid opening shutters
When she thinks her evening out will be spoilt by the rain.

[1] There is a beautiful pen and ink etching of the burial of the Boodle in the album.

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In their midst they hear a Something
With a steady, slow gulumphing
Of their myriad bootless feet, with their stockings out at heel,
All their pallid faces beaming,
All their pink eyes wildly gleaming,
They put "It" down and sit around as if before a meal.

Then in doleful chaunt amorous
They begin a dirge in chorus
(Like the noises that exude from a channel boat's saloon!
On a rough and stormy crossing,
When the boat delights in tossing),
Which makes the daisies blubber and aggravates the moon.

Then the boodles all together
Seem to grumble at the weather,
Having done so, they decide on digging out the grave.
So their bony fingers grovel
In the loose earth, and they shovel
Out the semblance of a sepulchre for their late-lamented knave.

When the corpse they nicely bury,
They water "It" with sherry,
Lay a sandwich by "Its" side, put a sixpence in "Its" mouth,
Then one last long sigh emitting
(Which you'll own is only fitting),
In hurried gasps they flitter to the dry and dusty south.

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BEFORE THE STORM

When the falling waters shiver,
And the dry leaves shake and quiver,
Ere the storm about to thunder blots out every streak of light;
There's a choking sound of groaning,
Just a low continual moaning,
And a form that's darker, blacker, than the deepest gloom of night.

Hammerwood, 1909.

A FRAGMENT

"A soul with good intent and purpose just
Discerns far more than lecturer can teach."
—*Sophocles.*

Ad tutorem.

And so you see, sir, tho' the lecture-room
Has never echoed to a tread of mine,
And tho' I've never at th' approach of nine
Leapt from the sleep that culls my beauty's bloom,

To congregate with common brainless herds,
With idle pen to illustrate the note,
On Girton's rose-bed naughtily to gloat,
To clog my memory with a mess of words,

Yet, as you see, my "soul with good intent"
"Discerns far more" by breakfasting at ten,
Imbibes more learning from a pipe than men.
A fireside seat my "purpose—just" contents.

So what's the use of lecturers good or bad,
With them include dons, deans and masters e'en;
My don's a soul with good intent, my dean
A "purpose just"—Oh, no, sir, I'm not mad.

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TO PHYLLIS

WHERE are those dainty frills and lace?
The straying curls, a gold-brown wreath,
That kissed your neck and cheeks beneath
The picture hat that framed your face?

Why this straw hat of man's attire?
And if a collar "is the thing,"
Oh! must it really be much higher
Than any bank clerk's? Can I sing

Of your airs and of your graces,
When you eye me as a man would—
Bold, not coy; and when your pace is
Three good feet, not less, I'm sure? Could

I now praise those curls that trickled
About your neck, now tightly strained?
I remember how they tickled
Us, once we sheltered when it rained.

You say you even want a vote;
I'm sure you don't quite know what for.
What you really want is note—
(Prometheus-like) at Asquith's door,

Or speechifying in Hyde Park,
Fierce in the fight and in the charge,
In Holloway, the grim and dark;
Or past St. Stephen's in a barge.

If only in the paper you
See your photo, struggling, kicking,
And in the arms of "Robert" too
(What you really want's a licking).

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Come now, my Phyllis, cease these queer,
Unnatural manners if you can!
Do be yourself, don't copy man;
Do be a woman and a dear.

(From *School Magazine.*)

THE BREEZE

I MAKE, sang the breeze, the soft music of trees,
When evening is nigh.
I bring the soft dew, which shall quicken anew
The flowers ere they die.

When past is the stay of the burning day,
With its withering glare,
I welcome the sight of the cool moonlight,
When the bright stars stare.

I hurry the clouds as they pass in crowds
'Cross the darkening sphere,
Then descend to the earth, and with outbursting mirth
I ripple the mere.

I quietly rest on the ocean's breast,
Or showing my power,
I scatter the spray of a salt-sea bay
In a silvery shower.

When the hours of night with their weird delight
Have wandered by,
I fan the dawn in her chariot drawn
Up the paling sky.

(From *The Harrovian.*)

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The following lines were found in a field-service note-book, and seem to have been the only attempt at versification during the war:[1]

THE German being only a modern Hun,
He feared not God as he should have done,
And on Meteren steeple he put his gun.

Thus scores of our honest men were slain,
And amongst the hop-poles now are lain,
Their little crosses dotting the plain.

When their comrades saw them lying there,
They swore to themselves that it was not

(Here the lines break off.)

[1] In the same book, showing great signs of wear and tear, were the verses by John Masefield, which begin with the following stanza:

AUGUST, 1914.
How still this quiet cornfield is to-night;
By an intenser glow the evening falls,
Bringing not darkness but a deeper light;
Among the stooks a partridge covey calls.

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II. PROSE

MACKEREL RAILING

You may hook a bass or pollack on a rod and line and play it as you would a salmon. That is sport. Mackerel fishing first and last does not pretend to be "sporting." But it is excellent fun, and when the fish are on the feed the excitement is fast and furious. The pleasures of a day after mackerel are not limited to the actual fishing.

The sun rises upon a clear September morning with a warmth and brightness that tries to blot out past misdemeanours. By ten, lunch and tea join the fishing tackle aboard our boat, and we leave the harbour and all that it means behind us. The sun lights up the warm red cliffs and soon disperses the grey film that is wreathed over the valley; it tones down the enlivening sharpness of the early morning air which first tells of autumn.

The morning we spend in sailing about the bay, with all our canvas out to catch the elusive breezes. By two o'clock there are many fewer sandwiches and buns in the cabin than when we set out; for even lying on a cabin-top watching a flapping sail or the lazy gulls wheeling over the flickering sun-path on the water renders an aching void when one is exposed to the sea and the air. After lunch a lingering cigarette, and

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then the more serious business of taking down the top sail and putting out the bob-lines.

The next item is "where to find the fish." A quarter of a mile away we see a number of gulls swooping and squeaking over the water. They are after the fry chased to the surface by the mackerel. We are not alone in disturbing the gulls at their meal. Even before we come up to the spot several boats are sailing over it with all their lines out, and ever and anon a flash gleaming against their dark sides tells that there are less fish in the bay than there were a few moments before.

A man at the helm; a bob and inner line and a pair of ready hands on each side of the boat; an empty and expectant wooden box on the floor, and we are ready for anything.

The first cannibal takes the bait (the favourite bait is a three-cornered strip of skin and flesh off the tail of a mackerel or a bare or white-feathered hook). As it is drawn up from the blue water quickly and surely, it gleams now white, now emerald green, and in a second it is flapping and sparkling in the bottom of the box. Almost directly after death the green of its back changes to blue; while all the while its white underside glows irridescent, like a crystallised rainbow.

In a few minutes several more join the first, and for two hours we sail backward and forwards over the shoal, hauling in one line and putting it back, during which time a fish has taken the other bait, so that the work is continuous. Not a word except an exclamation of surprise if a line is pulled in without a fish, or an indignant mutter if a fish drops back into the sea instead of into the boat. Hands and clothes are soaked with salt water and coated with slime, for mackerel have slimy scales,

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which come off at the slightest touch. Just the continuous motion of bending bodies and the persistent flash of fish.

At last, backs aching and arms tired, we note almost with pleasure that we are catching fewer and fewer fish; until we wind up the lines, make a tack for home, and proceed to count our catch. We caught just over two hundred, and a very pretty picture they made. They are given away by the boatmen to poor folk who come down to the wharf for them in the evening, and a very good dish mackerel make if eaten the same evening. As I said before, there is nothing of sport in this fishing, but the excitement is tense and the pleasure real. So we return to a hearty and well-deserved dinner, and last but not least to the sleep which is the reward of strenuous work in the open air.

AUTUMN[1]

One morning early in September as I first opened my eyes they lighted on a leaf lying on the carpet by the open window. Blown there by some chance gust of wind during the night time, it startled me, for its colour was a brilliant crimson, a typical autumn tint. It was Nature's rough awakening to the fact that, while we fancied ourselves secure in summer sunshine, we were really on the verge of autumn, with her damp embrace and tearful mists.

After that morning summer soon departed, not all at once, nor yet gradually day by day, but by fits and starts; a day or two of bright sunshine and then a week of mist and drizzle. One day the swallows gathered in

[1] Written when a boy at Harrow

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crowds, the next and they were all gone; not one was to be seen; one week and an oak assumed a cloak of buff yellow, the next her leaves began to drop, while a neighbouring maple took a richer scarlet.

Soon autumn came; and coming, wrapped the woods in mist, carpeted the damp paths with soaking leaves, and stripped the shivering trees of their last tattered rags. She bereft the copses of all colour, save where a patch of brambles glowed against the dark undergrowth and deep brown bracken; a robin's breast shone scarlet or the yellow, white and blue of a great tit stood out against the uniform greys of the surrounding trees and bushes.

The late morning sun, struggling to break through the chilly mist and cold grey clouds, flashed on the pinions of a mallard as it winged its way to some tree-grown pool, and burnished the copper of a cock pheasant till it gleamed again; it warmed the trunk of the beeches and lit up the birches' pale stems; then filtering through the ribbed branches, it tempted a rabbit to the entrance of its burrow.

The setting sun, sinking crimson behind the tree-topped hill, flooded the autumn sky with scarlet and purple, less hard and gaudy than the winter's sunset hues, more soft and more refined. It silhouetted the naked trees and hilltops, and bathed the plain in reflected glory; an instant more and it sank, leaving the land dark and colourless, save for a glow above the spot, where it disappeared from sight.

The autumn of the year is symbolic in more ways than one of the autumntide of a man's life.

It may come suddenly and unexpectedly upon a man who fancies himself in his full prime, showing its presence by the sudden weakening of one of his faculties,

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or it may come gradually, bit by bit, till he realises that his winter is near, with scarcely the intervention of an autumn.

The autumn of life is sad as that of autumn in nature: the absence of the colour and brightness of summer and the departure of the glory of manhood's prime and the magnificence of strength.

As in autumn, touches of belated sunshine sometimes warm declining years into a semblance of former happiness and comfort. Autumn is the nearing of the end of the year of life; the forerunner of winter, of death. But as in the story of the year, a spring will come after all, so in the story of life there is to be a yet more glorious spring.

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